

Food & Water Security in South Africa WEEKLY MONITOR

6 May - 12 May 2017

Prepared by Augustus Consulting

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1.0 Key Weekly Trends, Themes and Issues

- **South Africa's Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa says that land must be returned to its rightful owners as the land reform debate rages on in the country**
- **North West Premier Supra Mahumapelo wants specialised unit to deal with racism on farms amid growing racial tensions and violence in South Africa's farming areas**
- **Violent protests surge in South Africa amid growing socio-economic and political uncertainty in the country**
- **The 2017 Sanlam Benchmark Survey shows that almost 73% of professional, middle class South Africans are experiencing financial stress as families struggle to put food on the table**
- **South Africa's tractor sales edge lower in April amid slow economic growth in the country**
- **The first-quarter 2017 Business Partners SME Index shows that South African small and medium-sized enterprises have a low level of confidence in the country's business environment**
- **South Africa's Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister Senzeni Zokwana says government is working tirelessly to assist poultry farms as the crisis in the chicken industry deepens**
- **The fortunes of South African farmers improve slightly amid a stubborn drought cycle, with forecasts of El Niño drought conditions returning**
- **Cape Town dam level drops to 22% as the city struggles to effectively respond to the deepening drought crisis**
- **South Africa's Department of Water and Sanitation urges water users to inculcate the culture of using water more wisely as most dams across the country continue to decline week on week as prospects the return of the El Nino drought conditions increase**

- **South Africa's Department of Water and Sanitation Minister Nomvula Mokonyane says that the debt owed to the department by some water boards and municipalities amount to around R2.7 billion**

1.1 Food Security

1.1.1 South Africa's Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa says that land must be returned to its rightful owners as the land reform debate rages on in the country

On 7 May, *News24* reported that land must be returned to its rightful owners, presidential hopeful Cyril Ramaphosa said during his campaign trail in Grahamstown on Sunday.¹

1.1.2 North West Premier Supra Mahumapelo wants specialised unit to deal with racism on farms amid growing racial tensions and violence in South Africa's farming areas

On 8 May, *Eyewitness News* reported that North West Premier Supra Mahumapelo says he has evidence showing how some police officers in the province work with farmers to overlook cases of worker abuse.²

1.1.3 Violent protests surge in South Africa amid growing socio-economic and political uncertainty in the country

On 8 May, *The Citizen* reported that experts say what is needed is for those in leadership positions to sit down and listen to the people who elected them.³

1.1.4 The 2017 Sanlam Benchmark Survey shows that almost 73% of professional, middle class South Africans are experiencing financial stress as families struggle to put food on the table

On 9 May, *The Citizen* reported that almost 73% of professional, middle class South Africans experience financial stress.⁴

1.1.5 South Africa's tractor sales edge lower in April amid slow economic growth in the country

On 10 May, *Business Day* reported that tractor sales edged down by two units to 398 in April from a year ago after surging 18.7% to 515 units in March.⁵

¹ Land must be returned now - Cyril Ramaphosa, Lizeka Tandwa, News24, 7 May 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/land-must-be-returned-now-cyril-ramaphosa-20170507>

² NW Premier wants specialised unit to deal with racism on farms, Hitekani Magwedze, Eyewitness News, 8 May 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/05/08/specialised-units-could-soon-deal-with-racism-on-farms>

³ Protest action likely to continue unabated, say experts, Steven Tau, The Citizen, 8 May 2017, <http://citizen.co.za/news/news-national/1506281/protest-action-likely-to-continue-unabated-say-experts/>

⁴ More than 70% of middle class has financial flu, Ingé Lamprecht, The Citizen, 9 May 2017, <http://citizen.co.za/business/business-news/1507611/70-middle-class-financial-flu/>

⁵ Tractor sales edge lower in April after surge, Dominic Preuss, Business Day, 10 May 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/economy/2017-05-10-tractor-sales-edge-lower-in-april-after-surge/>

1.1.6 The first-quarter 2017 Business Partners SME Index shows that South African small and medium-sized enterprises have a low level of confidence in the country's business environment

On 11 May, *IOL Business* reported that South African small and medium-sized enterprises [SMEs] have a low level of confidence in the country's business environment, and the challenge they face to access finance is becoming acute.⁶

1.1.7 South Africa's Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister Senzeni Zokwana says government is working tirelessly to assist poultry farms as the crisis in the chicken industry deepens

On 11 May, *South African Government News* reported that Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister Senzeni Zokwana says government is working tirelessly to assist poultry farms that have been shut down due to illegal brown meat dumping.⁷

1.1.8 The fortunes of South African farmers improve slightly amid a stubborn drought cycle, with forecasts of El Niño drought conditions returning

On 11 May, *Business Day* reported that the fortunes of South African farmers are improving slightly after two years of hardship caused by one of the worst dry spells on record. But the food producers are not out of the woods yet, with forecasts of El Niño drought conditions returning.⁸

1.2 Water Security

1.2.1 Cape Town dam level drops to 22% as the city struggles to effectively respond to the deepening drought crisis

On 8 May, *Eyewitness News* reported that Cape Town residents are still using too much water.⁹

1.2.2 South Africa's Department of Water and Sanitation urges water users to inculcate the culture of using water more wisely as most dams across the country continue to decline week on week as prospects the return of the El Nino drought conditions increase

On 10 May, *South African Government News* reported that the Department of Water and Sanitation has urged water users to inculcate the culture of using water more wisely as most dams across the country continue to decline week on week.¹⁰

⁶ Economic confidence low among SMEs, Kabelo Khumalo, IOL Business Report, 11 May 2017, <http://www.iol.co.za/business-report/entrepreneurs/economic-confidence-low-among-smes-9057907>

⁷ Government working hard to reopen poultry farms, South African Government News, 11 May 2017, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/government-working-hard-reopen-poultry-farms>

⁸ Farmers doing better, but El Niño may return, Sunita Menon, Business Day, 11 May 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/companies/land-and-agriculture/2017-05-11-farmers-doing-better-but-el-nio-may-return/>

⁹ City of Cape Town dam level drops to 22%, Lindsay Dentlinger, Eyewitness News, 8 May 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/05/08/capetonians-still-using-too-much-water>

1.2.3 South Africa's Department of Water and Sanitation Minister Nomvula Mokonyane says that the debt owed to the department by some water boards and municipalities amount to around R2.7 billion

On 11 May, *South African Government News* reported that Water and Sanitation Minister Nomvula Mokonyane says debt owed to the department by some water boards and municipalities amounted to around R2.7 billion.¹¹

2.0 Daily Infographics: Water Security- Climate Change Nexus in South Africa: Cape Town's terrifying water shortage is an indication that climate change is an issue South Africa cannot turn a blind eye to



Figure 1. Water Security- Climate Change Nexus in South Africa: Cape Town's terrifying water shortage is an indication that climate change is an issue South Africa cannot turn a blind eye to (Source: 350 Africa)

3.0 Overall Assessment

- ❖ **The South African government is urged to start preparing for the imminent drought as food and water security in the country remains fragile.**

¹⁰ Use water carefully, South African Government News, 10 May 2017, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/use-water-carefully>

¹¹ Water and Sanitation owed R2.7bn, South African Government News, 11 May 2017, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/water-and-sanitation-owed-r27bn>