

Food & Water Security in South Africa WEEKLY MONITOR

14 October – 20 October 2017

Prepared by Augustus Consulting

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1.0 Key Weekly Trends, Themes and Issues

- **ANC presidential candidate Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma says Africans still don't have land in South Africa as the agrarian reform debate intensifies**
- **Agriculture Minister Senzeni Zokwana says state veterinarians were still assessing whether South Africa's chickens should be vaccinated amid the country's worst ever bird flu outbreak, with over four million chickens culled so far**
- **Western Cape farmers struggle as the bird flu outbreak and drought takes its toll amid reports that more than 35,000 jobs are on the line in the agricultural sector, estimated to cost the economy close to R800-million in losses**
- **Inflation surges to 5.1% in September from 4.8% in August amid slow growth and increasing socio-political uncertainty in South Africa**
- **Shortage of eggs to hit retail shelves in South Africa as the bird flu crisis deepens**
- **City of Cape Town criticized for an ineffective response to the deepening water crisis**
- **Water pipes worth R200m unusable due to a bugled tender process in Limpopo Province as poor planning continue to haunt South Africa's water sector**
- **South African government announces that plans are underway to ensure that the country gains the capacity to desalinate its own seawater**
- **Gauteng Province might be out of water by 2025 as South Africa grapples with the effects of climate change**
- **Time and money emerge as the two major obstacles in tackling Cape Town's water crisis as drought bites**

1.1 Food Security

1.1.1 ANC presidential candidate Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma says Africans still don't have land in South Africa as the agrarian reform debate intensifies

On 16 October, *Citizen* reported that the presidential candidate says the ANC has an obligation to conclude its struggle for land.¹

1.1.2 Agriculture Minister Senzeni Zokwana says state veterinarians were still assessing whether South Africa's chickens should be vaccinated amid the country's worst ever bird flu outbreak, with over four million chickens culled so far

On 18 October, *Fin24* reported that Agriculture Minister Senzeni Zokwana said state veterinarians were still assessing whether South Africa's chickens should be vaccinated amid the country's worst ever bird flu outbreak.²

1.1.3 Western Cape farmers struggle as the bird flu outbreak and drought takes its toll amid reports that more than 35,000 jobs are on the line in the agricultural sector, estimated to cost the economy close to R800-million in losses

On 18 October, *eNCA* reported that widespread bird flu combined with the devastating drought in the Western Cape are bringing farmers and workers to their knees.³

1.1.4 Inflation surges to 5.1% in September from 4.8% in August amid slow growth and increasing socio-political uncertainty in South Africa

On 18 October, *Business Day* reported that inflation, as measured by the annual change in the consumer price index (CPI), accelerated to 5.1% in September from 4.8% in August.⁴

1.1.5 Shortage of eggs to hit retail shelves in South Africa as the bird flu crisis deepens

On 18 October, *The New Age* reported that the shortage of eggs is expected to get worse as the country battles with avian flu.⁵

¹ Africans still don't have land, says Dlamini-Zuma, *Citizen Reporter*, 16 October 2017, <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/1690699/africans-still-dont-have-land-says-dlamini-zuma/>

² No decision yet on bird flu vaccination – Zokwana, Jan Cronje, *Fin24*, 18 October 2017, <http://www.fin24.com/Companies/Agribusiness/no-decision-yet-on-bird-flu-vaccination-zokwana-20171018>

³ Widespread bird flu, drought affect W Cape farmers, *eNCA*, 18 October 2017, <http://www.enca.com/south-africa/widespread-bird-flu-drought-affect-w-cape-farmers>

⁴ Inflation picks up a little faster than expected, Sunita Menon, *Business Day*, 18 October 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/economy/2017-10-18-inflation-picks-up-a-little-faster-than-expected/>

⁵ Shortage of eggs to hit retail shelves, Tatenda Chiriseri, *The New Age*, 18 October 2017, <http://www.thenewage.co.za/shortage-of-eggs-to-hit-retail-shelves/>

1.2 Water Security

1.2.1 City of Cape Town criticized for an ineffective response to the deepening water crisis

On 14 October, *Weekend Argus* reported that a Cape-based water desalination company, which is completing plants in India and Saudi Arabia that will deliver 800 million litres of potable water a day, has lambasted the City of Cape Town for failing to act more quickly in boosting the region's water supply.⁶

1.2.2 Water pipes worth R200m unusable due to a bungled tender process in Limpopo Province as poor planning continue to haunt South Africa's water sector

On 15 October, *City Press* reported that thanks to a bungled tender process, water pipes that cost South Africans more than R200m are now unusable after having being left to rot on the side of a road since 2010.⁷

1.2.3 South African government announces that plans are underway to ensure that the country gains the capacity to desalinate its own seawater

On 17 October, *South African Government News* reported that plans are underway to ensure that South Africa gains the capacity to desalinate its own seawater.⁸

1.2.4 Gauteng Province might be out of water by 2025 as South Africa grapples with the effects of climate change

On 18 October, *SABC Radio Desk* reported that Gauteng could run out of water by 2025, unless residents take action now.⁹

1.2.5 Time and money emerge as the two major obstacles in tackling Cape Town's water crisis as drought bites

On 19 October, *News24* reported that desalination plants and other plans - which are in the pipeline for Cape Town to help alleviate the water crisis - will probably cost the city billions of rand, and it is not yet clear where this money will come from.¹⁰

⁶ City of Cape Town's water 'bungle', Michael Morris, *Weekend Argus*, 14 October 2017, <https://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/news/city-of-cape-towns-water-bungle-11575998>

⁷ R200m in taxpayers' money down the drain, Sipho Masondo, *City Press*, 15 October 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/r200m-down-the-drain-20171015-2>

⁸ Desalination plans underway for SA, *South African Government News*, 17 October 2017, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/desalination-plans-underway-sa>

⁹ Gauteng might be out of water by 2025, *SABC Radio Desk*, 18 October 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/33cc7b004304ef54b0eafdc10a5ea4ab/Gauteng-might-be-out-of-water-by-2025-20171810>

¹⁰ Time and money - two major obstacles in tackling Cape Town's water crisis, Caryn Dolley, *News24*, 19 October 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/time-and-money-two-major-obstacles-in-tackling-cape-towns-water-crisis-20171019>

2.0 Weekly Infographics: Small farms are essential for food security in South Africa



Figure 1. Small farms are essential for food security in South Africa (Source: AgriFoodAID)

3.0 Overall Assessment

- ❖ The Minister of Agriculture needs to act more decisively to address the deepening bird flu crisis because it is now a major threat to food security and growth in the agricultural sector.
- ❖ The Minister of Water is urged to urgently establish the South African National Water Authority that will be responsible for crafting and implementing strategies aimed at improving water security in the country as well as addressing issues such as climate change that are causing water scarcity in provinces like Western Cape and Gauteng. Water security in South Africa is in grave danger. Decisive action is recommended.