

Food & Water Security in South Africa WEEKLY MONITOR

11 November – 17 November 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

- **South Africa faces egg and chicken shortages as the bird flu crisis deepens**
- **South Africa's agrarian reform failing to give the land back to the majority**
- **Child-support grants essential for poverty alleviation and poor household food security in South Africa**
- **South African banks prepare for the worst ahead of possible ratings downgrades amid slow growth and rising socio-political uncertainty in the country**
- **Hefty fuel price hikes loom in South Africa amid a weakening domestic economy**
- **KwaZulu-Natal to get a single Regional Water Board as part of the Department of Water and Sanitation's implementation of the rationalisation policy of water services and water management institutions in South Africa**
- **Beaufort West has run out of dam water and may soon also run out of borehole water as the drought crisis deepens in the Western Cape Province**
- **Climate change remains a major threat to water security in South Africa**
- **South Africa's Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Water Affairs and Sanitation recommends an audit of the Department of Water and Sanitation amid growing concerns on whether the Department can ensure its financial sustainability for effective bulk water and sanitation infrastructure development in the country**
- **City of Johannesburg threatens to throttle water supply in high use areas if usage is not reduced amid reports of low rainfall levels**

1.1 Food Security

1.1.1 South Africa faces egg and chicken shortages as the bird flu crisis deepens

On 10 November, *Business Day* reported that there is a possibility of egg and chicken shortages around the country due to the avian flu outbreak, given the number of chickens that have been culled or killed by the disease, the South African Poultry Association (Sapa) has warned.¹

1.1.2 South Africa's agrarian reform failing to give the land back to the majority

On 13 November, *The Citizen* reported that land is a highly charged and politicised issue all over the world.²

1.1.3 Child-support grants essential for poverty alleviation and poor household food security in South Africa

On 14 November, *Times Live* reported that income support for poor children is vital, and failure to deliver social-care grants will have a severe impact on the nutritional needs of children.³

1.1.4 South African banks prepare for the worst ahead of possible ratings downgrades amid slow growth and rising socio-political uncertainty in the country

On 14 November, *Business Day* reported that most banks have been factoring in downgrades for some time, with changes in evaluations likely to see SA removed from some indices tracked by global investors.⁴

1.1.5 Hefty fuel price hikes loom in South Africa amid a weakening domestic economy

On 15 November, *Wheels24* reported that mid-month fuel price data released by the Central Energy Fund (CEF) forecasts a sharp jump in fuel prices at the end of November, reports the Automobile Association.⁵

¹ Avian flu could lead to egg and chicken shortages, Bekezela Phakathi, *Business Day*, 10 November 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2017-11-10-avian-flu-could-lead-to-egg-and-chicken-shortages/>

² SA still struggling to 'give back the land', Ben Cousins and Ruth Hall, *The Citizen*, 13 November 2017, <https://citizen.co.za/talking-point/1726738/sa-still-struggling-to-give-back-the-land/>

³ Child-support grants crucial in fight against poverty: report, Ernest Mabuza, *Times Live*, 14 November 2017, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2017-11-14-child-support-grants-crucial-in-fight-against-poverty-report/>

⁴ SA banks prepare for the worst ahead of possible ratings downgrades, Renee Bonorchis, *Business Day*, 14 November 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/companies/financial-services/2017-11-14-sa-banks-prepare-for-the-worst-ahead-of-possible-ratings-downgrades/>

⁵ 'South Africans will face heavy fuel price hikes' – AA, *Wheels24*, 15 November 2017, http://www.wheels24.co.za/Fuel_Focus/south-africans-will-face-heavy-fuel-price-hikes-aa-20171115

1.2 Water

1.2.1 KwaZulu-Natal to get a single Regional Water Board as part of the Department of Water and Sanitation's implementation of the rationalisation policy of water services and water management institutions in South Africa

On 10 November, *South African Government News* reported that the Department of Water and Sanitation is implementing the rationalisation of water services and water management institutions which will see Mhlathuze and Umgeni water boards in KwaZulu-Natal, established into a single effective Regional Water Board.⁶

1.2.2 Beaufort West has run out of dam water and may soon also run out of borehole water as the drought crisis deepens in the Western Cape Province

On 13 November, *Cape Argus* reported that Beaufort West has run out of dam water and may soon also run out of borehole water.⁷

1.2.3 Climate change remains a major threat to water security in South Africa

On 14 November, *Traveller24* reported that with climate change being the fastest growing threat, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has revealed that the number of natural World Heritage sites threatened by climate change has grown significantly in just three years.⁸

1.2.4 South Africa's Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Water Affairs and Sanitation recommends an audit of the Department of Water and Sanitation amid growing concerns on whether the Department can ensure its financial sustainability for effective bulk water and sanitation infrastructure development in the country

On 14 November, *The New Age* reported that members of the portfolio committee on Water Affairs and Sanitation have expressed serious concerns on whether the Department can ensure its financial sustainability for effective bulk water and sanitation infrastructure development in South Africa.⁹

1.2.5 City of Johannesburg threatens to throttle water supply in high use areas if usage is not reduced amid reports of low rainfall levels

⁶ KZN to get single effective Water Board, South African Government News, 10 November 2017, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/kzn-get-single-effective-water-board>

⁷ #WaterCrisis: Beaufort West runs out of water, Jason Felix, Cape Argus, 13 November 2017, <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/watercrisis-beaufort-west-runs-out-of-water-11979994>

⁸ CoP23: Climatic extremes SA's biggest climate change concern, Unathi Nkanjeni, Traveller24, 14 November 2017, <http://www.traveller24.com/Explore/Green/cop23-climatic-extremes-sas-biggest-climate-change-concern-20171114>

⁹ Committee recommends Water Affairs and Sanitation audit, Dennis Cruywagen, The New Age, 14 November 2017, <http://www.thenewage.co.za/committee-recommends-water-affairs-and-sanitation-audit/>

On 14 November, *eNCA* reported that the City of Johannesburg has threatened to throttle water supply in high use areas if usage isn't reduced. The council says while water usage has spiked, mainly due to high temperatures, the amount of rainfall received is not sufficient.¹⁰

2.0 Weekly Infographics: Climate change affects agriculture and food security

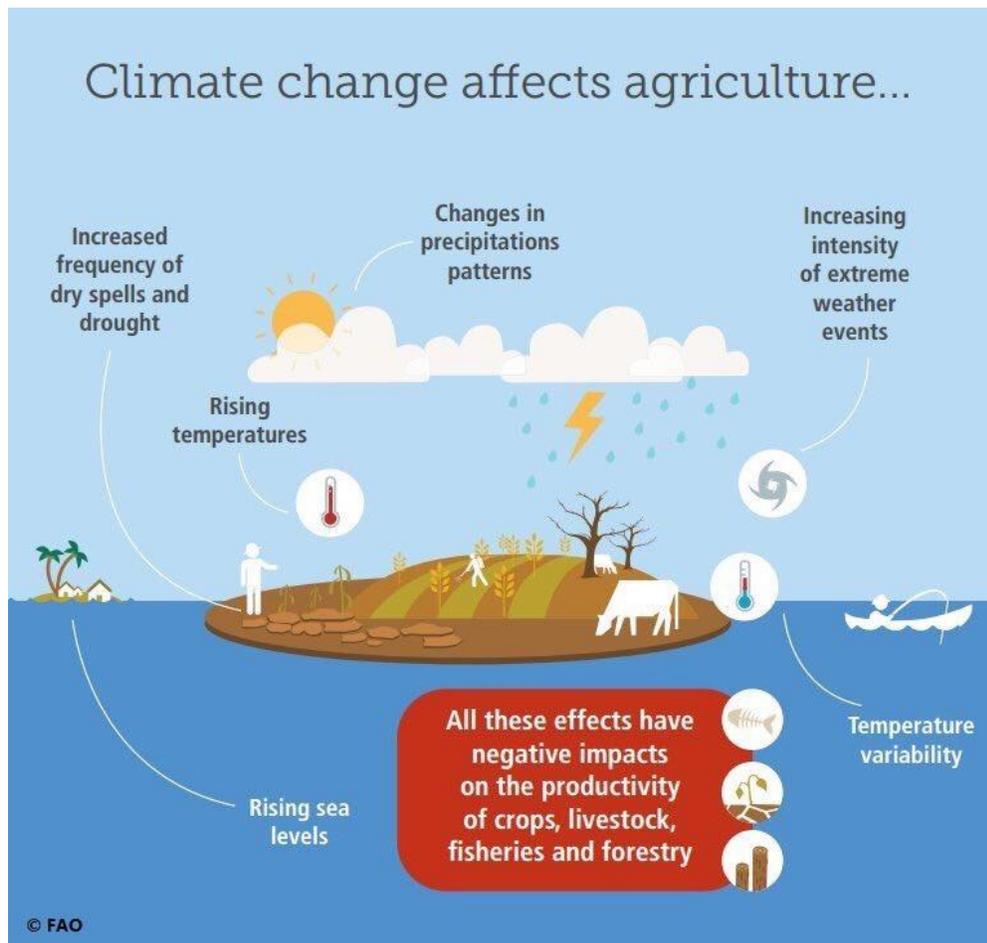


Figure 1. Climate change affects agriculture and food security (Source: FAO)

3.0 Overall Assessment

- ❖ The Department of Agriculture, Forestries and Fisheries (DAFF) is urged to deal more decisively with the deepening bird flu crisis as it now poses a major threat to food security in South Africa.
- ❖ There is need improve leadership and governance in the water sector in South Africa because it threatens water security in the country

¹⁰ Joburg warns of water throttling as consumption spikes, *eNCA*, 14 November 2017, <http://www.enca.com/south-africa/joburg-warns-of-water-throttling-as-consumption-spikes>