



**MINISTRY OF LANDS, AGRICULTURE, WATER, CLIMATE AND RURAL
RESETTLEMENT**

Meteorological Services Department

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**METEOROLOGICAL
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P.O.Box BE 150, Belvedere, Harare, Zimbabwe

All correspondences should be addressed to the Director

Minimizing Risks through Science

2019/20 SEASONAL RAINFALL FORECAST FOR ZIMBABWE

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

04 September 2019

THE ZIMBABWE NATIONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM

Introduction

The Meteorological Services Department of Zimbabwe (MSD) annually convenes a National Climate Outlook Forum (NACOF) where the seasonal rainfall forecast for the upcoming rainfall season is presented to national stakeholders. This follows the regional forum, Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF). It should be noted that the SARCOF Statement covers relatively large areas. As a result, the SARCOF statement may slightly differ from the NACOF statement, as it may not fully account for all factors that influence national climate variability.

Multi-sectoral stakeholders will use this planning tool, which is critical for enhancing socio-economic development of the nation since weather, and climate information is invaluable to all sectors of the economy.



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Seasonal Rainfall Outlook for Zimbabwe for 2019/20

The seasonal rainfall forecast is divided into two sub-seasons: October to December 2019 (OND) and January to March 2020 (JFM). The country is demarcated into three (3) zones according to the country’s climate drivers as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

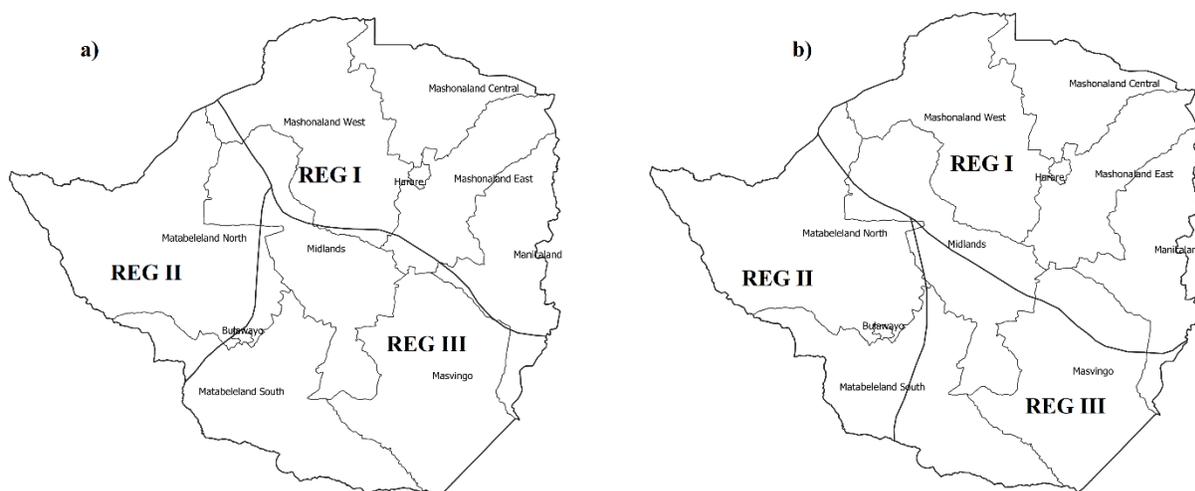


Figure 1: Zimbabwe’s Homogeneous Rainfall Zones a) OND b) JFM

NB: The forecast is for total cumulative seasonal rainfall amounts and is relative to the long-term averages particular to specific locations. It should be used together



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with the periodic updates (e.g. daily, 3day and 10day forecasts) issued by Meteorological Services Department to account for the distribution of rainfall during the season.

Terminology

Normal – long term average rainfall

Normal to below normal – cumulative rainfall totals **most** likely to be within the long term average range with a chance of going **below** this range

Normal to above normal – cumulative rainfall totals **most** likely to be within the long term average range with a chance of going **above** this range

Above normal to normal - cumulative rainfall totals **most** likely to be **above** the long term average range with a chance of falling within the long term average range

Below normal to normal - cumulative rainfall totals **most** likely to be **below** the long term average range with a chance of falling within the long term average range

The October 2019 to March 2020 forecast is as follows:

a) Rainfall outlook for the October to December (OND) 2019 period

Region I: Harare, much of Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central, northeastern parts of Midlands, most of Manicaland
Normal with a bias towards above normal



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Region II: The greater part of Matabeleland North, parts of Midlands and parts of Mashonaland West.

Normal with a bias towards above normal

Region III: Masvingo, the bulk of Midlands, the extreme southern parts of Manicaland and the bulk of Matabeleland South.

Normal with a bias towards below normal

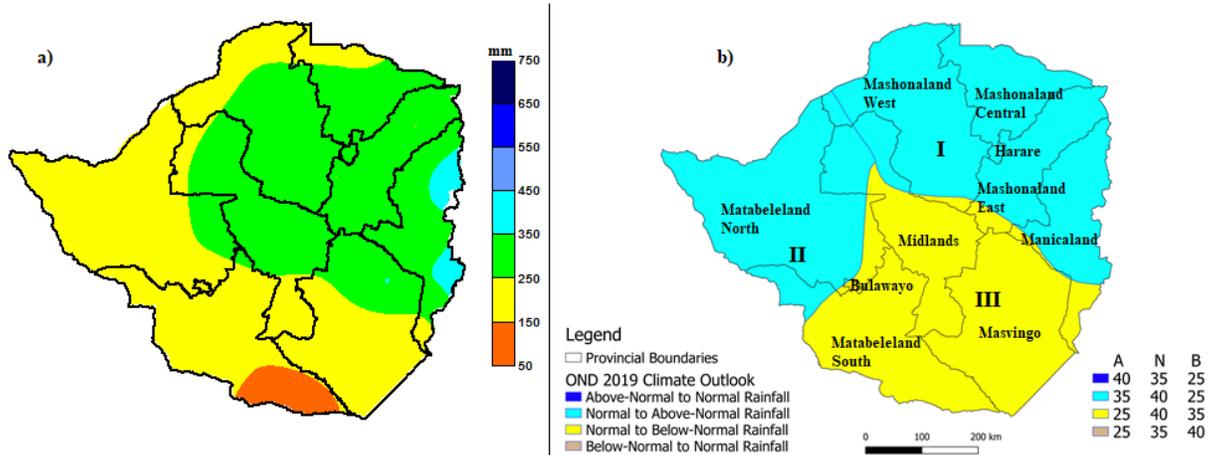


Figure 2(a) Long term mean rainfall for October-November-December (1981-2010), (b) Seasonal outlook for October-November-December

(b) Rainfall outlook for the January to March (JFM) 2020 period

Region I: Mashonaland Provinces, Harare, most of Manicaland, northern parts of Masvingo and northern parts of Midlands.

Normal with a bias towards below normal



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Region II: The greater part of Matabeleland North, northwest Matabeleland South, Bulawayo.

Normal with a bias towards below normal

Region III: The greater part of Masvingo, the extreme southern parts of Manicaland, southeast Matabeleland South and the southern parts of Midlands

Normal with a bias towards below normal

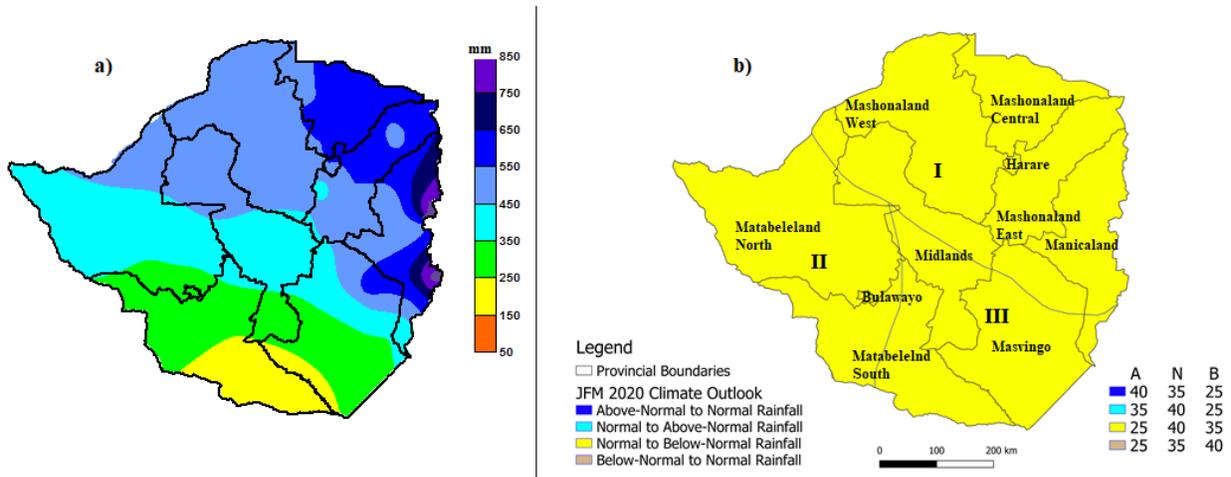


Figure 2(a) Long term mean rainfall for January-February-March (1981-2010), (b) Seasonal outlook for January-February-March.

Please Note: The Meteorological Services Department will continue to monitor all the available seasonal climate indicators which influence Zimbabwe’s rainfall as they evolve. Thus, the seasonal rainfall predictions will be updated on a monthly



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basis beginning end of October. In addition to this, there will be daily weather forecasts and 10-day weather bulletins.

IMPLICATIONS/ADVISORIES FOR THE 2019/20 RAINFALL SEASON OUTLOOK

Please note:

- ✚ October rains are generally erratic for rain-fed agriculture; more effective rains are expected from November into December 2019.
- ✚ Rainfall during the 2019/20 season is highly likely to be erratic especially during the second half of the season. Utilisation of irrigation facilities is encouraged.
- ✚ There is need to continue with water harvesting programmes and conservation agriculture practices.
- ✚ The policies of small dam construction, borehole drilling/ deepening, rehabilitation of irrigation schemes, conservation and protection of wetlands should continue.
- ✚ On farm activities should be guided by the daily, 3-day and 10-day weather forecasts as well as advice from Agricultural authorities. The 10-day weather forecasts will be issued from October until end of season.



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- ✚ Violent storms, prolonged dry spells, flash floods and tropical cyclones cannot be ruled out as the season progresses.