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Saturday, 19 October 2024

Heavy rain and flooding are expected over parts of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal from Sunday to Tuesday, due to a cut off low pressure system.

(20 to 22 October 2024)

Some areas in the summer rainfall region recently experienced their first Spring thunderstorms, but much of South Africa experienced calm weather conditions over the last few days. This is set to change with the arrival of a cut-off low pressure system, which will impact the southern, central, and eastern provinces from Sunday until Tuesday, 20 to 22 October 2024. Cut-off low-pressure systems are notorious for resulting in severe weather during the Spring months, including heavy rainfall that can lead to flooding, as well as intense thunderstorms accompanied by hail and damaging winds. This system is expected to result in widespread and disruptive rainfall along the coastal regions and adjacent areas of the Eastern Cape and the southern and central coast of KwaZulu-Natal, which may result in minor to significant flooding in some areas. Additionally, isolated severe thunderstorms are also possible over the eastern and central interior regions, affecting areas such as the Free State, Gauteng, North West, Mpumalanga, and parts of KwaZulu-Natal during this period.

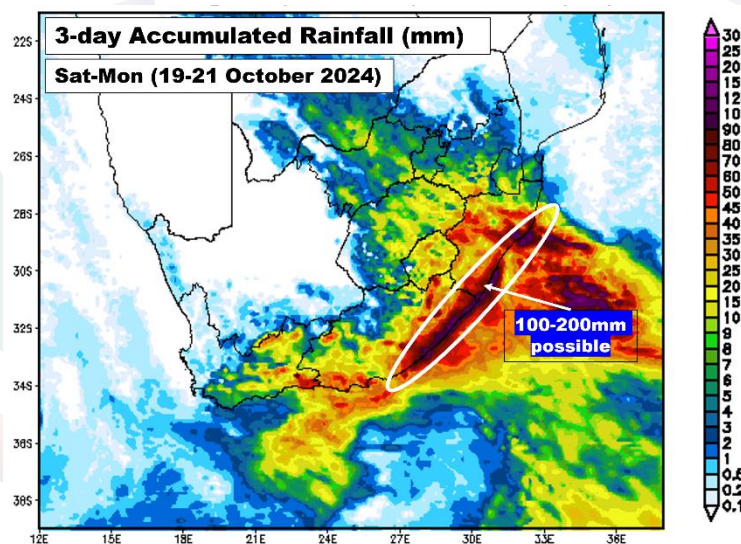


Figure 1: Predicted accumulated rainfall for the 3-day period from Saturday until Monday (19 to 21 October 2024) as forecast by the Global Unified Model (UMGA). Significant rainfall in the order of 100 to 200 mm is expected along the eastern coastline of the country during this period.

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The cut-off low will develop over the south-western parts of the country on Sunday, while a stationary surface high-pressure system will bring moisture to the southern and south-eastern regions. These systems will lead to widespread rainfall over parts of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal mainly from Sunday to Tuesday (see **Figure 1** for accumulated rainfall for the next 3 days). Some Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) models suggest that accumulated rainfall could reach 100 to 200 mm along the coastal areas of the Eastern Cape and the central and southern coast of KwaZulu-Natal during this period.

The SAWS has issued the following **Impact Based warnings**:

- Orange level 5 Warning: Disruptive rain leading to flooding of settlements, roads, damage to property and infrastructure is expected along the coast and adjacent interior between East London and Port Edward today on **Saturday (19/10/2024)**.
- Orange Level 6 Warning: Disruptive rain leading to flooding of settlements, roads, damage to property and infrastructure is expected along the coast and adjacent interior between Port Alfred and Mtunzini from **Sunday into Monday (20-21/10/2024)**.
- Yellow Level 4 Warning: Disruptive rain leading to localised flooding of settlement, roads, damage to property and infrastructure for the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, Kouga, Sundays River Valley, Makana and Mdlambe Local Municipality as well Ngqushwa are expected from tomorrow, on **Sunday into Monday and likely to persist until Tuesday**.
- Yellow Level 4 Warning: Severe thunderstorms with heavy downpour leading to localised flooding of settlements, low lying areas, resulting in closure of some bridges and roads, large amounts of small hail and damaging wind to informal/formal houses or structures and vehicles are expected over most parts of KwaZulu-Natal, the extreme eastern Free State and extreme southern Highveld of Mpumalanga from **Sunday into Monday (20-21/10/2024)**.
- Yellow level 2 Warning: Severe storms with heavy downpour leading to localised susceptible roads, low lying areas and bridges, large amounts of small hail that will result in localised damage to vehicles, houses and structures as well as localised damage to informal houses due to strong damaging wind are expected over the eastern parts of both North West and the Free State, Gauteng, the Mpumalanga Highveld and extreme northeast of KwaZulu-Natal as well as over the extreme south-west of Limpopo on **Sunday into Monday (20-21/10/2024)**
- Yellow Level 2 Warning: Disruptive rain leading to localised flooding of susceptible roads, low-lying areas and bridges are expected south of escarpment of the eastern parts of the Eastern Cape from **Sunday into Monday (20-21/10/2024)**.

Most parts of the country will experience warm to hot temperatures during this period, though cool to cold conditions can be anticipated in parts of the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and southern KwaZulu-Natal due to extensive cloud cover and rainfall. Calm weather conditions are expected to return on Wednesday as the cut-off low moves eastward, away from the south-eastern coast.

The South African Weather Service will continue to monitor any further developments relating to this weather system and will issue subsequent updates as required. Furthermore, the public is urged and encouraged to regularly follow weather forecasts on television and radio. Updated information in this regard will regularly be available at www.weathersa.co.za as well as via the SA Weather Service X account at @SAWeatherServic.

Given these potential impacts, it is essential to stay informed and monitor weather warnings from the South African Weather Service throughout this period to ensure preparedness and safety.

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