

5 March 2026

Storms and persistent tropical rainfall in the days ahead

A sustained spell of tropically sourced rainfall is on the cards for a large part of southern Africa, especially over the central and eastern interior in the coming days, extending through the weekend. Thunderstorms are also expected to accompany the rain, with some of these storms expected to become severe, associated with heavy downpours and a distinct risk of localised flooding. Consequently, a range of Impact-Based severe weather warnings have already been issued by the South African Weather Service (SAWS), valid from today.

An upper-air trough currently dominates the circulation pattern over the central interior of South Africa, resulting in scattered to widespread showers and thundershowers over the eastern part of the Northern Cape, the western part of the Free State, and most parts of the Eastern Cape (Figure 1).

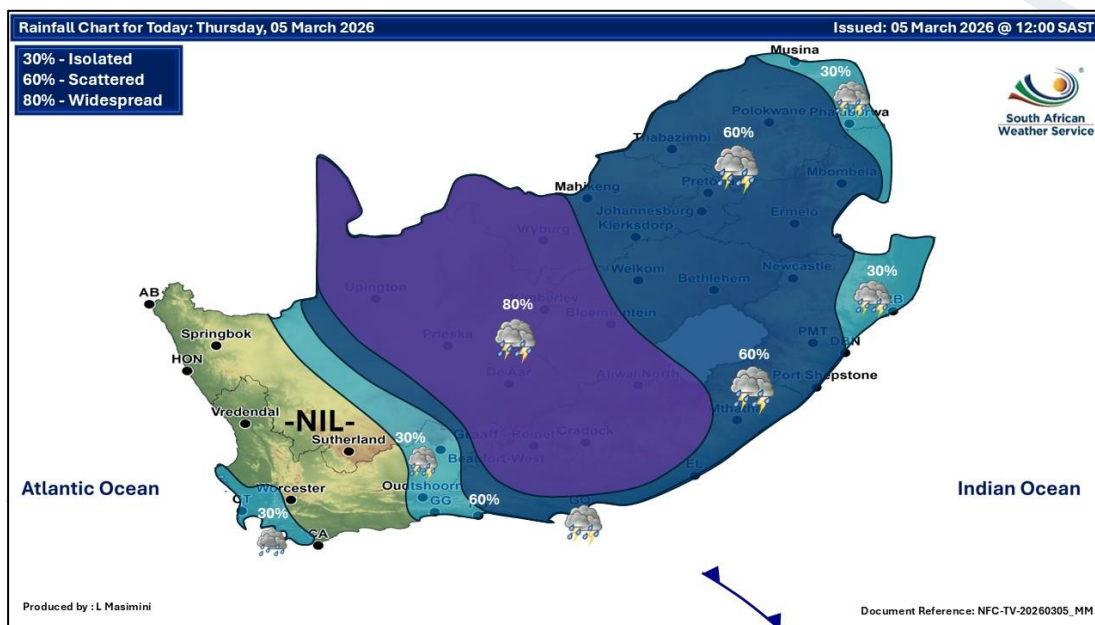


Figure 1: Rainfall chart for today, Thursday 5 March 2026. Source: SAWS.

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An Orange Level 5 warning for severe thunderstorms has been issued for parts of the Free State and Northern Cape for today, 5 March 2026 (Figure 2). These storms are expected to be severe and may be accompanied by heavy downpours that could lead to flooding of roads, settlements, and low-lying areas, as well as damaging winds, large amounts of small hail, and excessive lightning. Localised infrastructure damage, disruptions to traffic, and dangerous outdoor conditions may occur in affected areas.

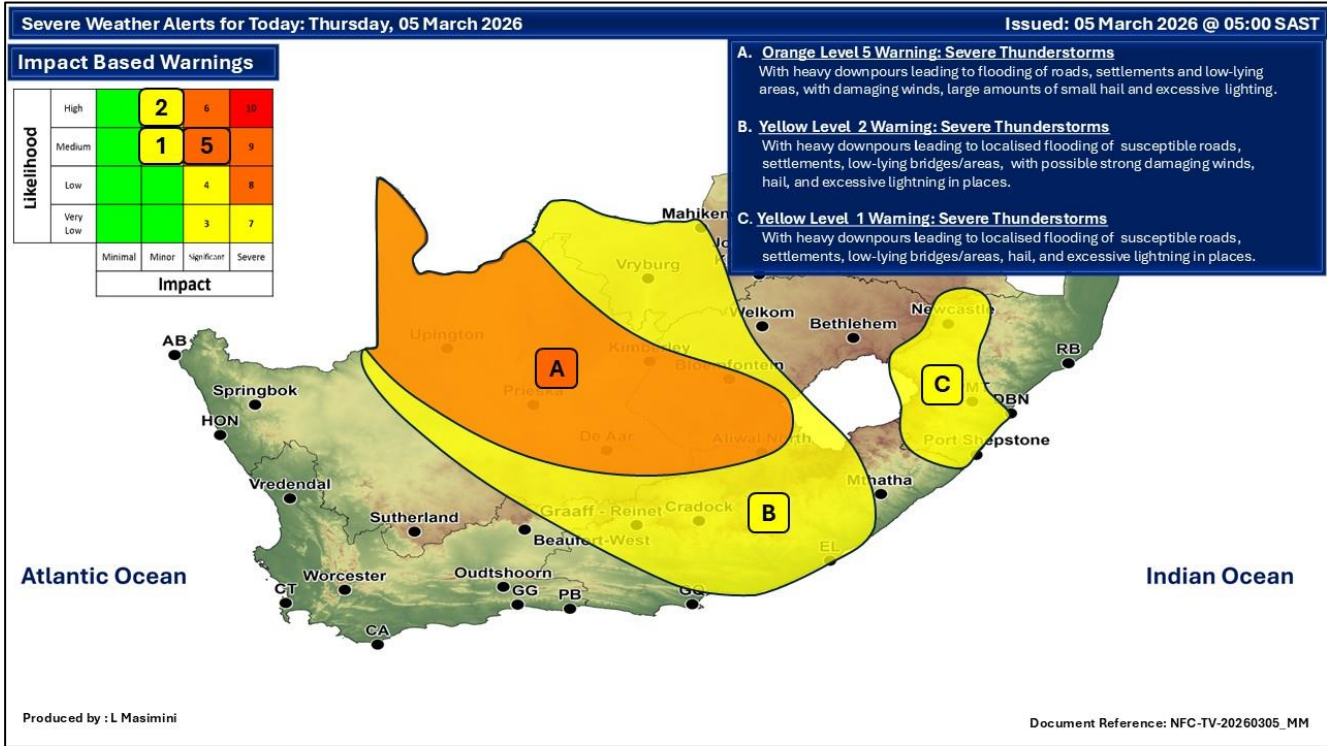


Figure 2: Impact-Based Severe Weather alerts for today, Thursday 5 March 2026. Source: SAWS.

As the upper-air system shifts eastwards, it is expected to evolve into a Tropical Temperate Trough (TTT) over the eastern and north-eastern parts of the country. A TTT is a rainfall-producing weather system that typically transports significant amounts of moisture from the tropical regions of Africa into the mid-latitudes, assisted by a mid-latitude upper-air trough, often resulting in widespread and persistent rainfall over large parts of the country.

This system is expected to further develop and intensify over the eastern interior from Friday, 6 March 2026, bringing persistent rain and thundershowers to parts of North West, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo. An Orange Level 5 warning for severe thunderstorms has been issued for North West and the Free State for Friday, while Yellow Level 2 and Yellow Level 4 warnings have been issued for Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

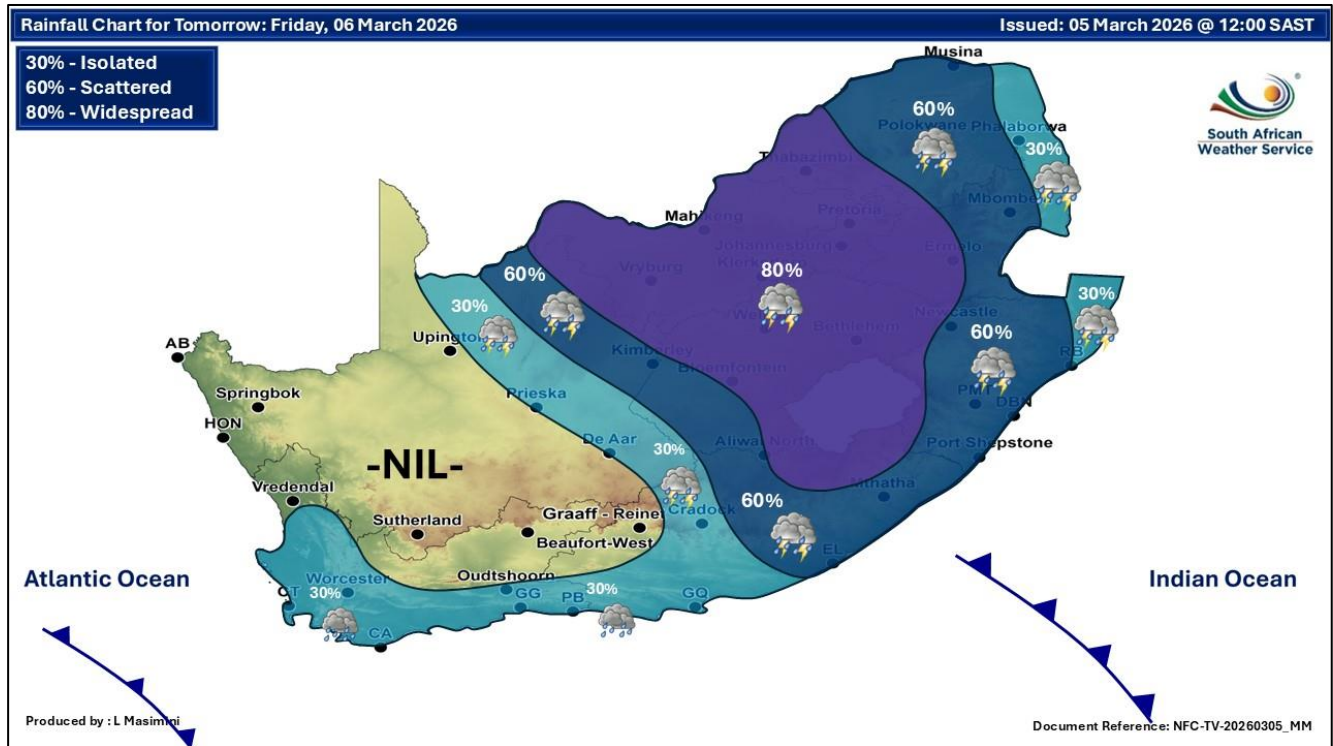


Figure 3: Rainfall chart for tomorrow, Friday 6 March 2026. Source: SAWS.

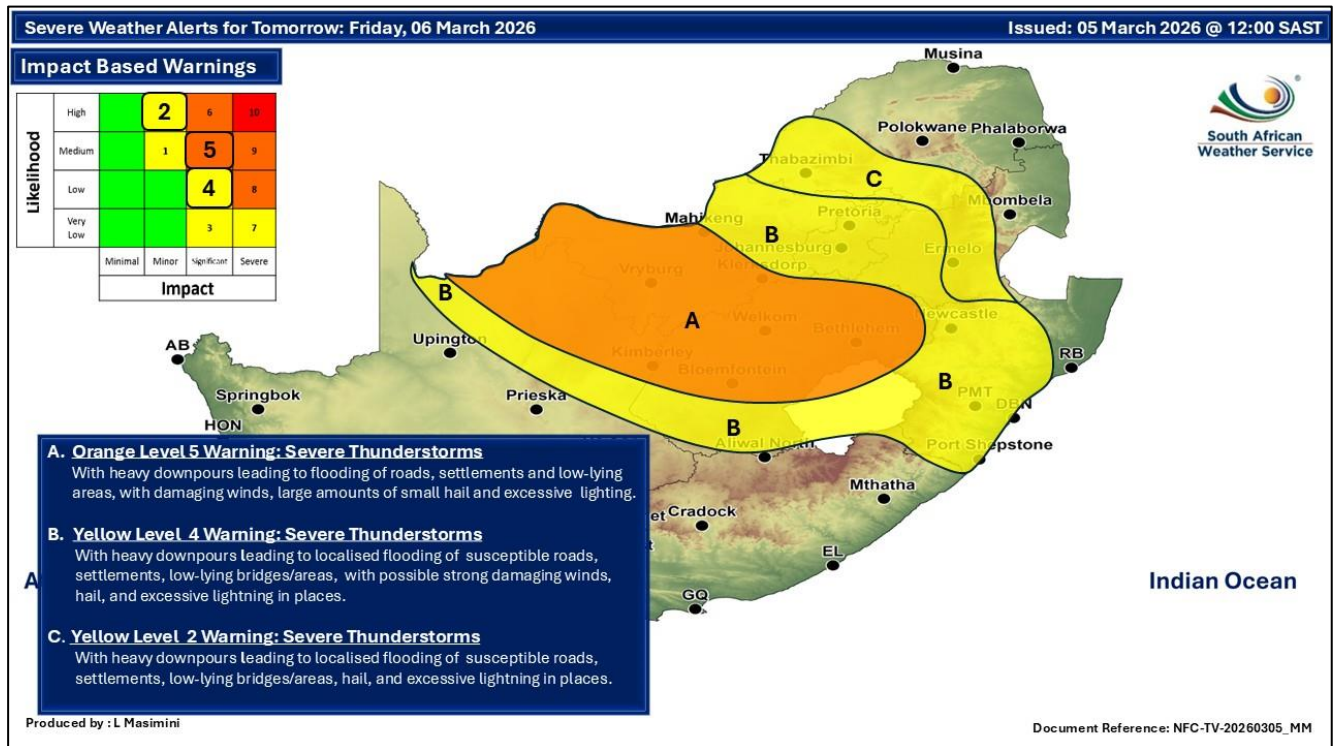


Figure 4: Impact-Based Severe Weather Warnings valid for tomorrow, Friday 6 March 2026. Source: SAWS.

The TTT system is expected to move further east on Saturday 7, March and Sunday, 8 March 2026 (Figure 5), with the rainfall band shifting towards the north-eastern parts of the country. Widespread showers and thundershowers are, therefore, expected over the Lowveld areas of Limpopo and Mpumalanga, which remain vulnerable due to saturated soils and the potential for additional runoff. This may increase the risk of localised flooding of rivers and low-lying areas, particularly where heavy rainfall persists.

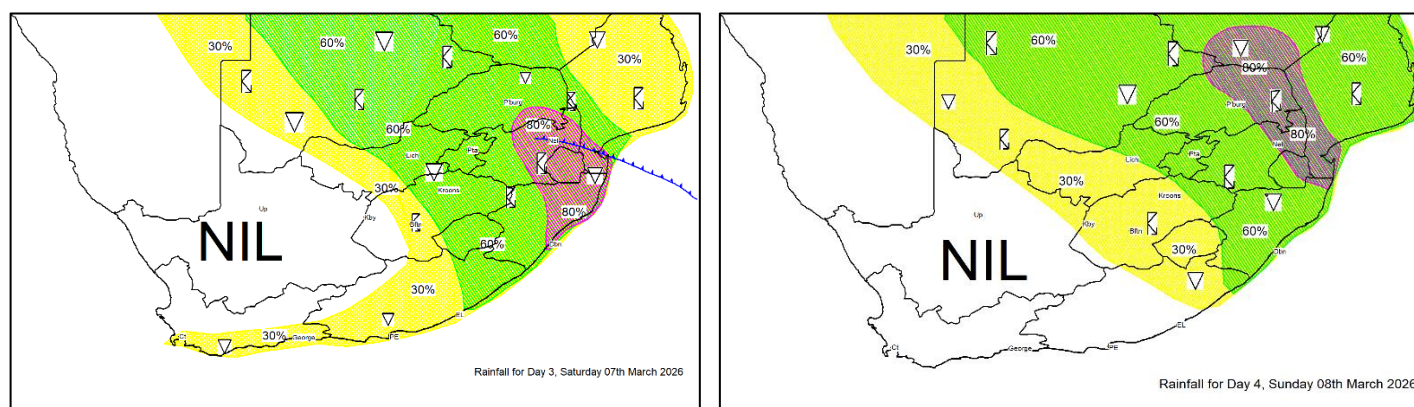


Figure 5: Extended rainfall forecast for Saturday and Sunday, 7 and 8 March 2026. Source: SAWS.

The SAWS will continue to monitor the system closely and will issue updates as new information becomes available. The public and relevant authorities are urged to follow official weather warnings and advisories from reliable sources.

For regular updates, please visit <https://www.weathersa.co.za> or follow SAWS official media channels.

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