

Wednesday, 12 November 2025

Parts of South Africa experience one of the wettest Octobers in recent years

October marks the start of the rainy season for South Africa's summer rainfall regions, and this year the month brought above-normal rainfall to several areas. In fact, for some locations, October 2025 ranked among the wettest in recent history.

Several measuring stations recorded rainfall totals that far exceed their long-term averages, with some reporting more than four times their average October rainfall. While a large part of the country experienced below normal rainfall, within that area, there were still some stations that had their wettest October over the last 31 years.

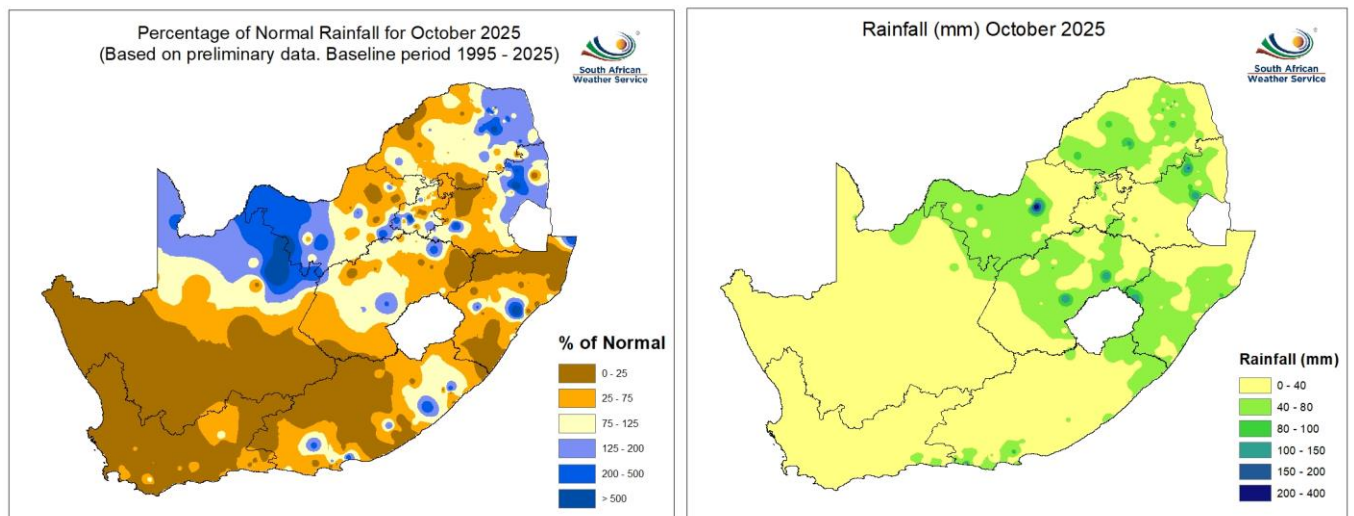


Figure 1: Based on preliminary data, rainfall in October 2025 as a percentage of the 1995 – 2025 long-term average (left) and the actual October 2025 rainfall in mm (right).

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As shown in Figure 1 (left), parts of the Northern Cape, North West, the Free State, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga experienced October rainfall that far exceeded their long-term monthly averages by at least 25%, with some by as much as 500 – 1000% as illustrated in Table 1 below. Despite some parts of the summer rainfall region receiving below normal rainfall, there were still some stations that had their wettest October in recent years as shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Selected stations that recorded the highest rainfall amounts in October 2025 (over 100 mm), compared to the long-term averages over the last 31 years (1995-2025).

Station	Province	Average October rainfall (mm)	October 2025 rainfall (mm)	October 2025 rainfall % of normal
THABAZIMBI	Limpopo	26,25	101	384,71
VUVHA CLINIC ARS	Limpopo	13,48	103,4	767,06
MODJADJI WATER PLANT	Limpopo	10,91	106,2	973,45
MOKOPANE	Limpopo	40,77	116,4	285,48
PORT ELIZABETH - COEGA RIVER UPPER ARS	Eastern Cape	45,87	116,6	254,19
BARBERTON PRISON ARS	Mpumalanga	28,86	120,8	418,57
EXCELSIOR ARS	Free State	24,99	121,4	485,73
CATHEDRAL PEAK - HOTEL	KwaZulu-Natal	88,77	122,8	138,33
STORMRIVER FOREST FERN FARM ARS	Eastern Cape	48,43	123,2	254,41
BETHLEHEM WO	Free State	68,91	125,4	181,99
MUKUMBANI TEA ESTATE – VENDA	Limpopo	23,29	144,8	621,64
TSHAKUMA AWS	Limpopo	13,88	151,4	1090,98
GRASKOP AWS	Mpumalanga	85,01	163,2	191,99
LICHTENBURG	North West	50,43	243,2	482,22

Table 2: Selected stations that recorded the wettest October 2025 rainfall totals compared to 1995-2025 climatological averages, representing the wettest locations across South Africa during the month over the last 31 years.

Station	Province	October 2025 rainfall (mm)	Previous Wettest October Year (Data in mm)
EXCELSIOR ARS	Free State	121,4	117,0 (2021)
ELIM – HOSP	Limpopo	99,0	86,5 (2003)
MODJADJI WATER PLANT	Limpopo	106,2	91,4 (2020)
MOKOPANE	Limpopo	116,4	84,0 (2020)
MUKUMBANI TEA ESTATE - VENDA	Limpopo	144,8	137,2 (2017)
VUVHA CLINIC ARS	Limpopo	103,4	94,6 (2021)
LICHTENBURG	North West	243,2	114,6 (2007)
VRYBURG - MOOILAAGTE ARS	North West	72,6	53,0 (2021)
VAALHARTS AWS	Northern Cape	65,0	60,6 (2021)

Ultimately, the data illustrate that October 2025 was one of the wettest Octobers on record, with extreme rainfall events affecting multiple provinces particularly over the summer rainfall region of the country and producing widespread departures from typical October rainfall patterns. This may have had some notable impacts on sectors such as agriculture, human settlements, water management, and disaster risk reduction.

In contrast, the western and north-western parts of the country remained relatively dry, with totals mostly below 50 mm, consistent with their typical October climatology.

The outlook for the remainder of the summer season is for enhanced probabilities for above-normal rainfall through the bulk of the central and eastern parts of the country. With that, many places can also expect to experience below normal daytime temperatures.

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