



INTRA-ACP CLIMATE SERVICES AND RELATED APPLICATIONS PROGRAMME

# SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

## CLIMATE SERVICES CENTRE (SADC-CSC)

### REGIONAL CLIMATE MONTHLY MONITOR

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**ClimSA**  
INTRA-ACP CLIMATE SERVICES AND RELATED APPLICATIONS PROGRAMME



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#### BENEFICIARIES



## A. HIGHLIGHTS

- **The rainfall during January:** Rainfall across the SADC region in January 2026 was highly variable. Very heavy rainfall (180–300 mm) occurred over parts of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, western Tanzania, southern DRC, eastern Angola, and Madagascar, with the highest amounts recorded in Madagascar and Mozambique. Despite these wet conditions in some areas, much of the subcontinent experienced below-normal rainfall, particularly over western Angola, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, northern Zambia, northern Mozambique, and eastern Tanzania, while only a few areas recorded above-normal rainfall.
- **Drought monitoring:** During January 2026, long-term soil moisture conditions (12-month SPI) indicated moderately to severely dry conditions across parts of northern and south-eastern DRC, western Angola, the western fringes of Namibia, south-western South Africa, eastern Tanzania, and isolated areas of Madagascar. However, near-normal conditions prevailed across much of the SADC region, with only isolated areas experiencing moderately wet conditions. Shorter-term soil moisture conditions (3-month SPI) showed localized dry conditions in parts of western Angola and Namibia, central DRC, southern and south-western South Africa, and southern Madagascar, while most of the region experienced near-normal soil moisture conditions.
- **Dry days:** January 2026 was characterised by prolonged dry spells of 27–30 consecutive dry days across the western parts of the subcontinent, including western Angola, Namibia, southwest Botswana and western South Africa. In contrast, central and eastern areas recorded shorter dry spells of about 3–6 days, indicating relatively frequent rainfall, while the rest of the region experienced around 15 dry days, consistent with the relatively wet conditions observed in parts of the region during the month.
- **The minimum temperature anomalies:** In January 2026, the lowest mean minimum temperatures, around 8 °C, were observed over the interior of Lesotho and South Africa, while most of the SADC region recorded mean minimum temperatures between 20 and 23 °C. Higher minimum temperatures, exceeding 23 °C, were observed in eastern

areas including southern Tanzania, Malawi, most of Mozambique and coastal Madagascar. Minimum temperature anomalies were predominantly positive across large parts of the subcontinent, particularly in the DRC, Angola, Namibia, western Tanzania, South Africa and coastal Madagascar, where anomalies reached around +3 °C. In contrast, parts of northeastern DRC and eastern Botswana recorded negative anomalies of about -3 °C, while the rest of the region experienced near-normal minimum temperature conditions.

➤ **Maximum temperatures anomalies:**

In January 2026, mean maximum temperatures of 35–39 °C were observed in parts of northern DRC, the west coast of Angola, eastern Tanzania, central Mozambique, Namibia, western South Africa and the west coast of Madagascar, while most of the region recorded milder temperatures ranging between 24 and 28 °C. Maximum temperature anomalies were predominantly positive across much of the subcontinent, particularly over Madagascar where anomalies exceeded +3 °C, whereas parts of Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique experienced negative anomalies of up to about -3 °C.

➤ **Rainfall and temperature outlook for February 2026:**

For February 2026, above-normal rainfall is expected across much of the central SADC region, while below-normal rainfall is forecast over parts of Tanzania, northern Mozambique and the western side of the subcontinent. Temperatures are generally forecast to be above normal across most of the region, with below-normal temperatures expected in Botswana, eastern Namibia, central South Africa, Lesotho and eastern Tanzania.

## 1. REGIONAL RAINFALL PERFORMANCE

During January 2026, rainfall distribution across the SADC region was highly variable. Parts of the region — including most of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, western Tanzania, the southern third of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), eastern Angola, and the entire island of Madagascar — experienced very heavy rainfall, with totals ranging between 180 mm and 300 mm. The heaviest rainfall was predominantly observed over Madagascar, Mozambique, and parts of Zambia. Other areas, including the northernmost parts of Zambia and north-eastern South Africa, recorded moderate to above-normal rainfall, while the rest of the region remained relatively dry [Figure 1, left].

Rainfall anomaly patterns indicated markedly below-normal conditions across much of the subcontinent, particularly over western Angola, most of Namibia and Botswana, large parts of South Africa, northern Zambia, northern Mozambique, and eastern Tanzania. In contrast, parts of western DRC, western Tanzania, the northernmost parts of Botswana, and southern Mozambique recorded positive rainfall anomalies, while most other areas experienced near-normal conditions [Figure 1, right].

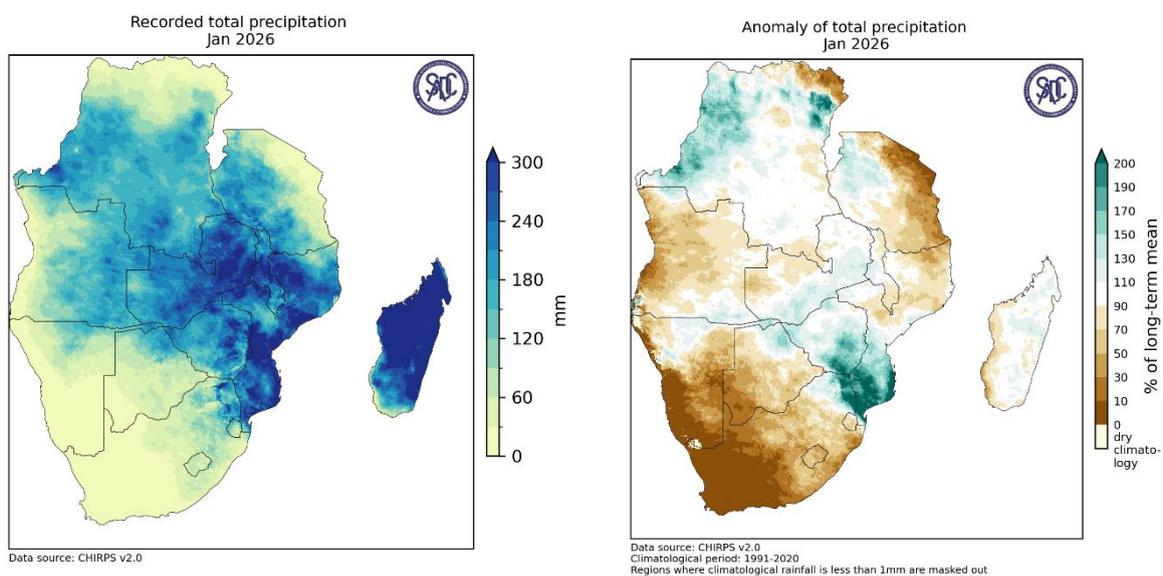


Figure 1: Observed rainfall (left) and rainfall anomaly (right) for the month of January 2026.

### 1.1 Drought Monitoring

#### 1.1.1 Seasonal and Annual Drought Assessment

During January 2026, long-term soil moisture conditions, as reflected by the 12-month Standardised Precipitation Index (SPI), indicated moderately to severely dry conditions across parts of northern and south-eastern DRC, western Angola, the western fringes of Namibia, south-western South Africa, eastern Tanzania, and isolated areas of Madagascar. Near-normal conditions prevailed across large portions of the region, including much of the DRC, eastern and southern Angola, most of Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, eastern South Africa, western Tanzania, and central Madagascar. Moderately wet conditions were also observed in isolated areas of western DRC, northern Angola, parts of Zimbabwe and Botswana, as well as Malawi, Zambia, and western Tanzania [Figure 2, left].

Shorter-term soil moisture conditions, based on the 3-month SPI, showed moderately dry to very dry conditions across the western fringes of Angola and Namibia, parts of central DRC, southern and south-western South Africa, and southern Madagascar. Near-normal soil moisture conditions were observed across much of the subcontinent, particularly over the central areas of the SADC region, including most of the DRC, Zambia, eastern Angola, Namibia, much of Botswana and Zimbabwe, eastern South Africa, north-eastern Madagascar, and isolated areas in the southern

parts of the island. Overall, most of the region experienced near-normal conditions during the period [Figure 2, right].

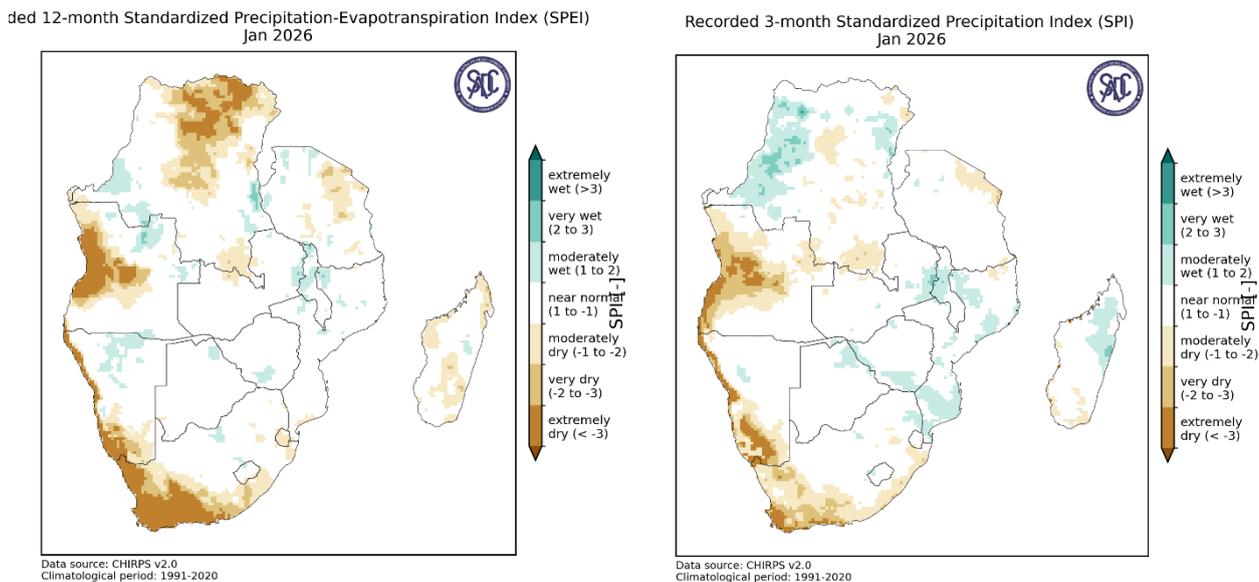


Figure 2: Drought assessment: SPI for 12-months (left) and 3-months SPI (right).

### 1.1.2 Short term drought (dry spells)

During January 2026, prolonged dry spells lasting between 27 and 30 consecutive dry days were observed over the western side of the subcontinent, covering the western parts of Angola, most of western Namibia, southwest Botswana, the western half of the Republic of South Africa, northeastern DRC and the eastern parts of Tanzania. The central parts of the subcontinent, covering most of the DRC, eastern Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, parts of northeastern South Africa, parts of Mozambique and most of Madagascar, recorded dry spells of about 3 to 6 days, indicative of relatively frequent rainfall during the month. The rest of the region recorded around 15 dry days during January 2026, consistent with the relatively wet conditions observed across parts of the region this year [Figure 3].

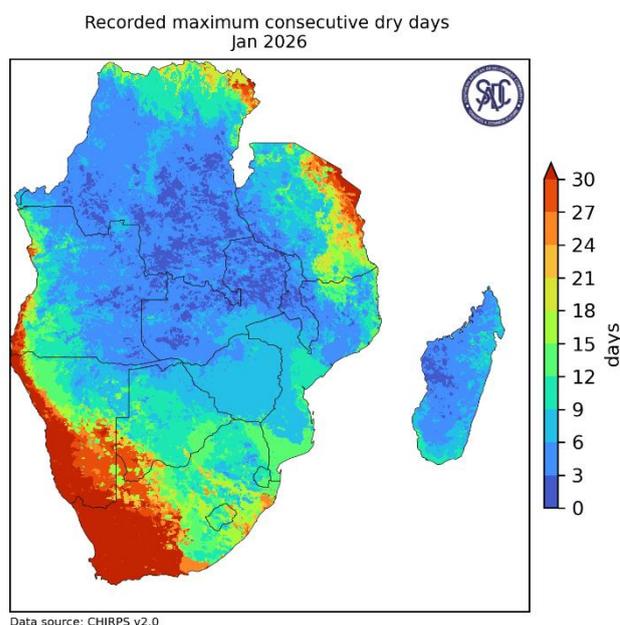


Figure 3: Dry spells prevalence during the month of January 2026.

## 1.2 Extreme Rainfall

Most of the subcontinent did not experience extreme single-day precipitation events during January 2026. Large areas, including much of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Angola, Namibia and Botswana, as well as parts of western Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and western South Africa, recorded little to no rainfall. In contrast, the eastern parts of the subcontinent, including western Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, most of Mozambique, parts of northeastern South Africa and the island of Madagascar, recorded maximum one-day precipitation totals of around **50 mm**, with isolated areas in **Mozambique and Madagascar reaching up to 90 mm**.

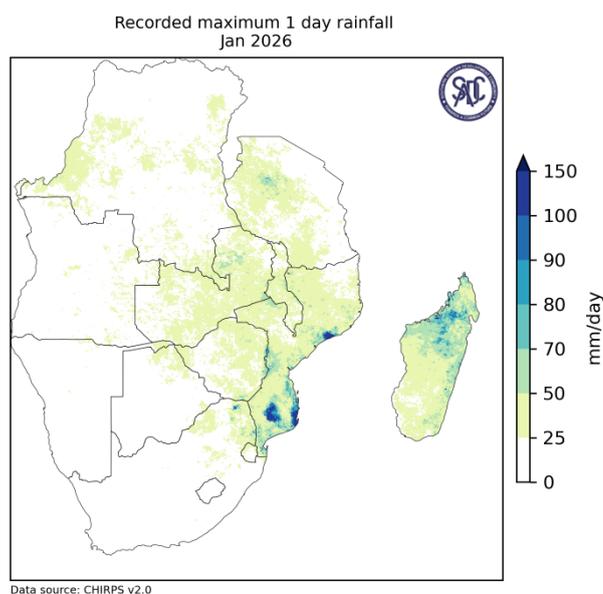


Figure 4: Maximum rainfall recorded over a one-day period during the month of January 2026.

## 2. REGIONAL TEMPERATURE

### 2.1 Minimum Temperature

In January 2026, the lowest mean minimum temperatures, reaching around **8 °C**, were observed over much of the interior of Lesotho and South Africa, whereas the bulk of the SADC region — including most of the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Madagascar — recorded mean minimum temperatures in the range of 20 to 23 °C. The eastern parts of the subcontinent, including southern Tanzania, Malawi, most of Mozambique and coastal parts of Madagascar, recorded mean minimum temperatures above 23 °C [Figure 5, left].

Mean minimum temperature anomalies were predominantly positive across large parts of the subcontinent, including the coastal zones of Madagascar, much of the DRC, Angola, Namibia, western Tanzania and most of South Africa, where anomalies of around +3 °C were recorded. Conversely, parts of northeastern DRC and eastern Botswana recorded negative anomalies of around -3 °C, while the rest of the subcontinent, including coastal areas of Madagascar, recorded near-normal minimum temperature anomalies, [Figure 5, right].

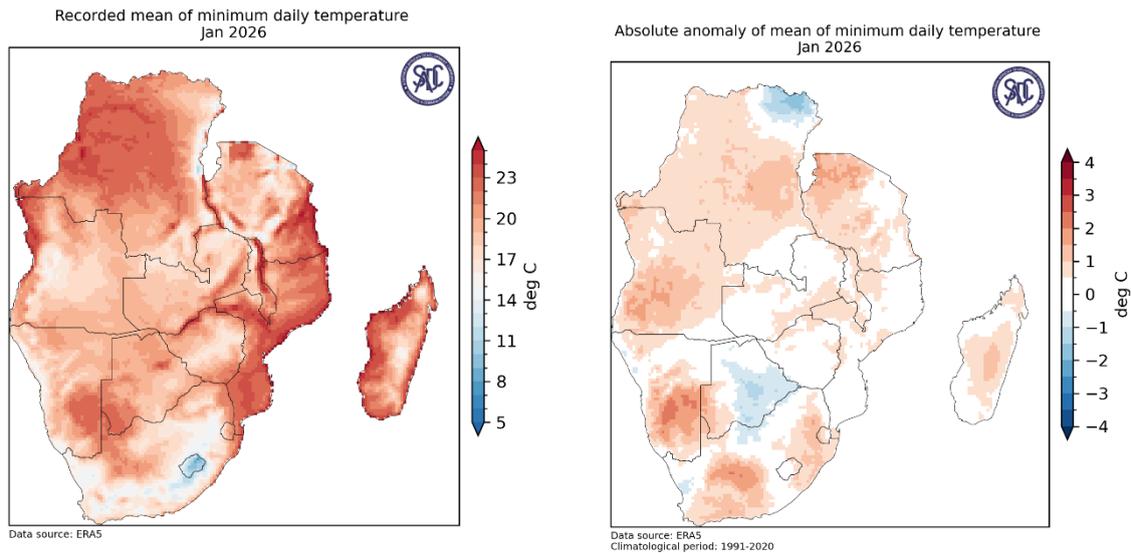


Figure 5: Observed average minimum temperature (left) and anomalies (right) for January 2026.

## 2.2 Maximum Temperature

During January 2026, mean maximum temperatures ranging between 35 °C and 39 °C were recorded in the northernmost parts of the DRC, along the west coast of Angola, eastern Tanzania, parts of central Mozambique, Namibia, western South Africa and the west coast of Madagascar. The rest of the region recorded relatively mild temperatures ranging from 24 to 28 °C [Figure 6, left].

Maximum temperature anomalies during January 2026 were predominantly positive across much of the subcontinent, including across most of Madagascar, where anomalies exceeded +3 °C. In contrast, negative anomalies of up to about -3 °C were recorded over parts of Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, [Figure 6, right].

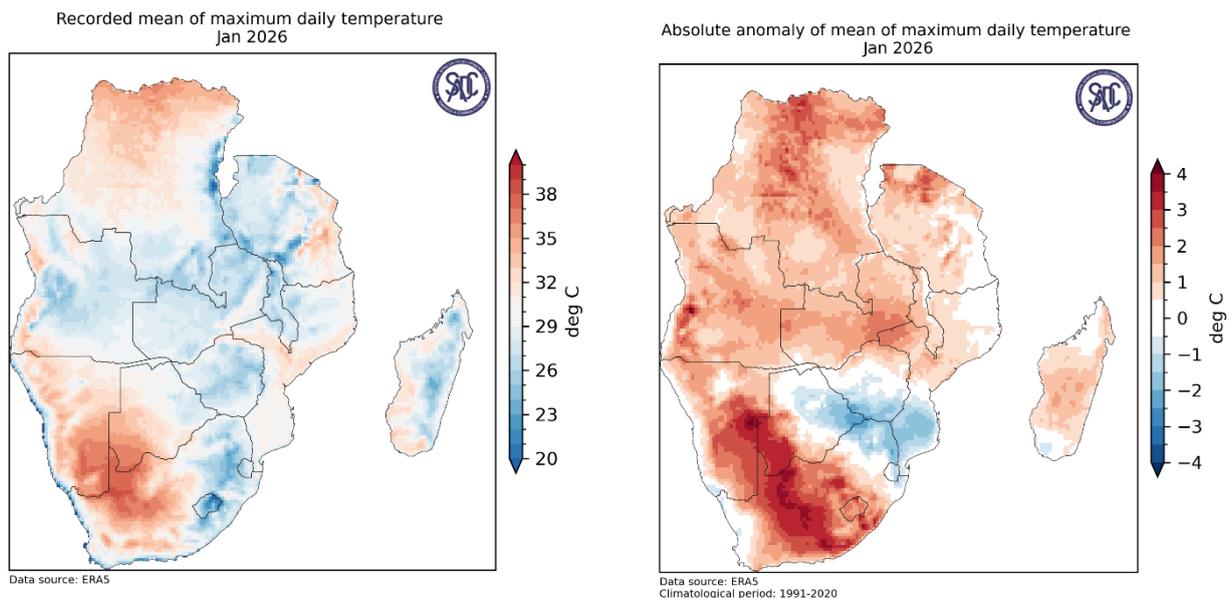


Figure 6: Observed maximum average temperature (left) and anomalies (right) for January 2026.

### 3. REGIONAL MONTHLY OUTLOOKS

#### 3.1 Rainfall Outlook

An increased likelihood of above-normal rainfall is forecast for February 2026 across much of the central parts of the subregion, including parts of the DRC, most of Zambia, southeastern Angola, the bulk of Botswana, Zimbabwe, the southern third of Mozambique, and the eastern half of South Africa. In contrast, below-normal rainfall is forecast for the northern tip of Mozambique, much of Tanzania, central DRC, and the western side of the subcontinent, including western Angola, western South Africa, and western Namibia. Near-normal rainfall conditions are expected in isolated areas, mainly across parts of the DRC, northern Angola, parts of Tanzania, and southern Madagascar [Figure 7]

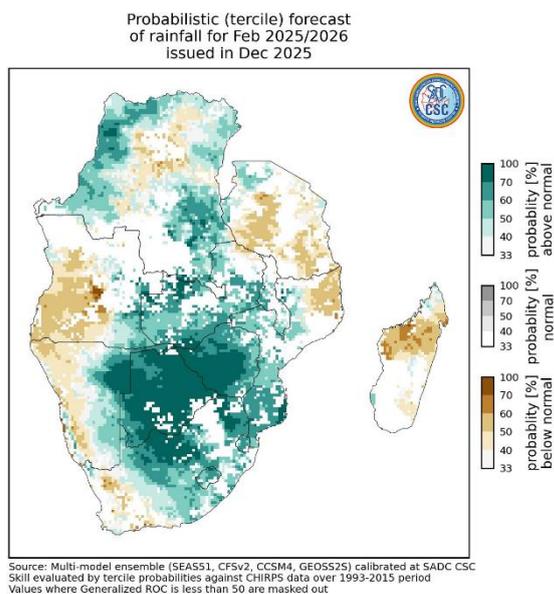


Figure 7: Rainfall probabilistic forecast for February 2026

#### 3.2 Temperature Outlook

Above-normal temperatures are forecast to prevail across most of the SADC region during February 2026. However, below-normal temperatures are expected over Botswana, eastern Namibia, central South Africa, Lesotho and eastern Tanzania [Figure 8].

Probabilistic (tercile) forecast  
of mean temperature for Feb 2025/2026  
issued in Dec 2025

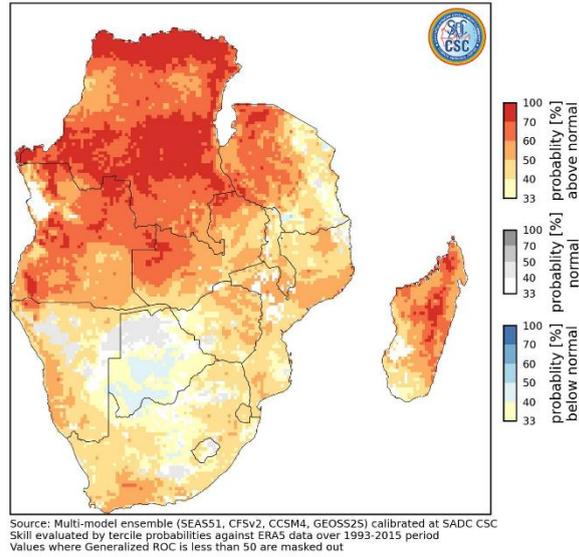


Figure 8: Temperature probabilistic forecast for February 2026

**NOTE:**

This bulletin used CHIRPS and ERA5 data. While these datasets are considered broadly representative to local conditions over the SADC region, the results presented here October differ from those derived using local observations from Member States.

***Users are therefore, urged to consult the local National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) for local conditions and detailed interpretation of the contents of this bulletin.***



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