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NEWSLETTER

SASSCAL
Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management
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In this Issue

Executive Director's Desk

Prof. Nelago Indongo
Executive Director

Welcome to the January–June 2026 edition of the SASSCAL Newsletter.

The first half of 2026 has been a period of growth, collaboration, and renewed commitment as SASSCAL continues to strengthen its role as a leading regional organisation supporting science, innovation, and sustainable development in Southern Africa. Throughout this reporting period, we have remained focused on generating scientific knowledge, building human capacity, strengthening partnerships, and providing evidence-based solutions to address climate change and promote adaptive land management.

One of the major highlights during this period was the successful transition of leadership within the SASSCAL Council of Ministers. We warmly welcome Honourable Inge Zaamwani, Namibia's Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, as the new Chairperson of the Council. We also extend our sincere appreciation to Honourable Wynter Mmolotsi of Botswana for his dedicated leadership over the past three years. Under his stewardship, SASSCAL continued to expand its scientific infrastructure, strengthen regional cooperation, and deliver impactful research across member states.

Regional collaboration remained at the heart of our work. Following the directive of the SASSCAL Council of Ministers, we initiated engagements with Malawi and Tanzania as part of our strategy to expand SASSCAL membership across the Southern African Development Community (SADC). These discussions reflect our shared understanding that climate change knows no borders and that stronger regional cooperation is essential to building resilience and achieving sustainable development.

Research and knowledge generation also remained central to our mission. We were pleased to launch the first SASSCAL 2.0 Climate Change Dialogue in Zambia, bringing together researchers, policymakers, development partners, and communities to discuss how scientific evidence can better inform policy and practice. The dialogue also marked the launch of the Call for Book Chapters under the SASSCAL 2.0 Research Programme, ensuring that valuable research findings are documented and shared widely. In addition, SASSCAL commenced an important climate modelling and projections project for Namibia under the National Adaptation Plan Programme, which will provide critical climate information to strengthen national adaptation planning and decision-making.

The newsletter also highlights SASSCAL's continued contribution to climate information services through an analysis of the predicted 2026/27 El Niño event. By providing scientific assessments and climate outlooks, SASSCAL continues to support governments, institutions, and communities with information needed to prepare for climate-related risks.

Capacity development remains one of our core priorities. During this period, Namibia inaugurated the third cohort of the TVET Green Hydrogen Scholarship Programme for youth from the Hardap and ||Kharas regions. As the implementing agency of the Joint Communiqué of Intent between the Governments of Namibia and Germany, SASSCAL is proud to support the development of a skilled workforce that will contribute to Namibia's emerging green hydrogen economy and broader green industrialisation agenda.

Internally, 2026 marked the beginning of a new chapter for SASSCAL. During our All Staff Retreat, we finalised our Annual Operational Plan, aligned our organisational priorities, and reinforced our commitment to transformation, accountability, innovation, and excellence. We also welcomed several highly qualified professionals to our Regional Secretariat and National Nodes, strengthening our scientific, technical, and operational capacity to deliver on our mandate.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the continued support of our Member States, the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), our research institutions, development partners, universities, implementing partners, and the many scientists and stakeholders who contribute to SASSCAL's success.

I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the SASSCAL Governing Board, Council of Ministers, and our dedicated staff across the Regional Secretariat and National Nodes for their professionalism, commitment, and hard work.

As we look ahead to the second half of 2026, we remain committed to expanding our impact, strengthening regional partnerships, advancing scientific excellence, and ensuring that research continues to deliver practical solutions that improve livelihoods, strengthen climate resilience, and support sustainable development across Southern Africa.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of our newsletter and learning more about the important work being undertaken across the SASSCAL region.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

NAMIBIA'S INGE ZAAMWANI ELECTED SASSCAL CHAIR, PLEDGES MEASURABLE RESULTS AND STRONG REGIONAL COOPERATION

Incoming SASSCAL Council of Ministers Chairperson, Honourable Inge Zaamwani, Namibia's Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, with outgoing Chairperson, Honourable Wynter Mmolotsi, Botswana's Minister of Environment and Tourism

Namibia's Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, Honourable Inge Zaamwani, has been elected Chairperson of the SASSCAL Council of Ministers. Her appointment was confirmed during the Council's meeting held in Gaborone, Botswana.

The SASSCAL Council of Ministers is the highest decision-making body of the Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL). It is made up of ministers from member states, along with Germany as the Principal funding partner. The Council provides political direction and supports decisions aimed at strengthening sustainable development and climate resilience in the region.

Hon. Zaamwani takes over from Botswana's Minister of Environment and Tourism, Honourable Wynter Mmolotsi, who served as Chairperson from 2023 to 2026.

Focus on Results and Accountability

Members of the SASSCAL Council of Ministers pictured with invited guests and dignitaries at the event

In her acceptance speech, Hon. Zaamwani said she recognises the responsibility that comes with the role. She stressed that her leadership will focus on ensuring that decisions taken by the Council lead to real, measurable outcomes. "We will ensure that decisions of the Council are translated into tangible and measurable outcomes," she said.

She added that Namibia will build on the progress made by the outgoing Chair and continue to strengthen SASSCAL's impact across the region. Hon. Zaamwani outlined several priorities for her term, including expanding SASSCAL's work across southern Africa, strengthening cooperation among member states, and promoting shared ownership of the organisation's vision. She also committed to increasing SASSCAL's visibility, credibility, and impact both regionally and internationally.

Call for Strong Commitment from Member States

SASSCAL Council of Ministers members and representatives pictured at the event

Hon. Zaamwani further called on member states to ratify the SASSCAL Treaty and honour their financial commitments. She said this is important for strengthening the organisation's governance, improving its operations, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

She noted that strong financial and legal support from member countries would help SASSCAL remain effective and relevant in addressing climate change challenges in the region. The new Chairperson also highlighted the importance of maintaining strong relations with Germany, SASSCAL's main funding partner. She said continued financial support will be critical for research programmes and for implementing SASSCAL Strategy 3.0. "A strong and predictable partnership will help protect ongoing programmes and support impactful research," she said.

Namibia Commits to Leadership Role

Hon. Zaamwani reaffirmed Namibia's commitment to leading the Council with dedication and humility. She said the country is ready to work closely with all member states, partners, and stakeholders to advance SASSCAL's mandate.

"We look forward to delivering lasting benefits for our people and our environment," she said.

Outgoing Chair Highlights Achievements

Outgoing Chairperson Hon. Wynter Mmolotsi praised SASSCAL's progress during his term, saying the organisation has delivered strong results across the region.

He highlighted improvements in climate data collection, including the installation of 154 automatic weather stations across member countries. These have helped improve early warning systems and provide better climate information for planning in agriculture, water management, and disaster risk reduction.

Hon. Mmolotsi also pointed to SASSCAL's support for research and innovation in sustainable land management, ecosystem restoration, and climate resilience. He said the organisation has invested in capacity building through training programmes, workshops, and Schools of Excellence.

In Botswana, he noted that SASSCAL has supported 13 research projects worth 34 million pula. He added that three Botswana students have completed doctoral studies under the programme and are now contributing to national water security efforts.

He also announced plans to establish a Centre of Excellence in Botswana, focusing on biodiversity and ecosystem health, with support from both the government and Germany.

SASSCAL Council of Ministers Members and representatives and SASSCAL Board members pictured

Regional Leadership Representation

The SASSCAL Council of Ministers includes representatives from Angola, Botswana, Germany, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia.

Members of the Council include:

- Honourable Inge Zaamwani (Namibia) – Chairperson
- Honourable Felix Mutati (Zambia) – Vice-Chairperson
- Honourable Wynter Mmolotsi (Botswana)
- Honourable Albano Vicente Lopes Ferreira (Angola)
- Honourable Dorothee Bär (Germany)
- Honourable Blade Nzimande (South Africa)

The Council continues to play a key role in guiding SASSCAL's work in addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development across member countries and southern Africa.

IN PICTURES: SASSCAL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING

Germany's Ambassador to Botswana, H.E. Gabriela Bennemann, pictured with Dr. Verena Hebbecker, Germany's Alternate Governing Board Member for SASSCAL

Professor Virgínia Quartim, Angola's Alternate Governing Board Member for SASSCAL, pictured with Mr. John Lukonde Chongo, Zambia's Alternate Governing Board Member for SASSCAL

Former SASSCAL Governing Board Member from Botswana, Mr. Balisi Gopolang, pictured with Ms. Johanna Mumangeni, SASSCAL Board Secretary and Legal Advisor

Hon. Dorothee Bär, SASSCAL Council Member and Germany's Federal Minister of Research, Technology and Space, addressing the meeting virtually

SASSCAL INAUGURATES NEW GOVERNING BOARD AND APPOINTS NAMIBIA'S MR. TEOFILUS NGHITILA AS CHAIRPERSON

The newly appointed SASSCAL Governing Board members pose for a group photo with SASSCAL officials during the Board induction programme in Swakopmund, Namibia

SASSCAL has officially inaugurated its new Governing Board, effective **1 April 2026.** During the Board's first meeting, **Mr. Teofilus Nghitila** from **Namibia** was elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Board, while **Professor Patricia Mogomotsi** from **Botswana** was elected as the Vice-Chairperson. Their three-year term will run from **April 2026 to March 2029.**

SASSCAL hosted the induction programme for the newly appointed Board members alongside the Board's first Ordinary Meeting in **Swakopmund, Namibia,** on **28 - 29 April 2026.** The induction introduced members to SASSCAL's governance, programmes, and strategic priorities.

The new Governing Board consists of:

- **Dr. Antonio Alcochete** – Angola
- **Professor Patricia Mogomotsi** – Botswana
- **Dr. Christiaan Alecke** – Germany
- **Mr. Teofilus Nghitila** – Namibia
- **Dr. Larry Mweeta** – Zambia

Each Board member is supported by an alternate representative from their respective SASSCAL Member State.

Newly elected SASSCAL Governing Board Chairperson, Mr. Teofilus Nghitila (right), and Vice-Chairperson, Professor Patricia Mogomotsi (centre), pictured with the SASSCAL Alternate Governing Board Member from Botswana during the Board induction programme in Swakopmund, Namibia

As part of the induction programme held on **28 April 2026,** Board members were introduced to **SASSCAL Strategy 3.0,** which begins this year. They also received an overview of the SASSCAL Treaty, research programmes, governance framework, operational policies, financial management systems, and the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Board.

The induction also familiarised members with the Board Manual, which guides the Board's work and decision-making. The induction marks the beginning of the new Governing Board's role in providing strategic leadership and oversight as SASSCAL continues to advance scientific research, strengthen regional collaboration, and support sustainable development across its Member States.

The outgoing Governing Board members are former Chairperson Professor Gabriel Miguel (Angola), Mr. Balisi Gopolang (Botswana), Ms. Alexandria Angala (Namibia), and Ms. Mmampei Chaba (South Africa).

MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION ENGAGEMENT CONTINUES AS SASSCAL ENGAGES TANZANIA

SASSCAL Board Chairperson, Prof. Luis Miguel; Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Alexandria Angala; and Executive Director, Prof. Nelago Indongo during the meeting

SASSCAL has taken another step in expanding its regional membership with a high-level engagement in Tanzania.

Prof. Gabriel Miguel, Chairperson of the SASSCAL Governing Board, together with his delegation, met with Dr. Richard Muyungi, Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Vice President of Tanzania. The meeting took place in Dar es Salaam on 6 March 2026. The discussion focused on the possible expansion of SASSCAL membership to Tanzania. Dr. Muyungi welcomed the initiative and highlighted that SASSCAL's work strongly aligns with the government's development priorities, particularly the pillar focusing on environmental sustainability and climate resilience. Both sides agreed to continue discussions towards establishing a formal collaboration.

Also present at the meeting were SASSCAL Interim Vice-Chair Alexandria Angala and SASSCAL Executive Director Prof. Nelago Indongo, along with Ambassador Baraka Luvanda, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Vice President, and senior officials from both the Office of the Vice President and SASSCAL.

SASSCAL has been mandated by its Council of Ministers to expand its membership across the SADC region, recognising that climate change does not respect borders and that Southern Africa faces shared climate and environmental challenges.

Tanzania is the second country that SASSCAL has engaged in recent weeks, following a similar visit to Malawi two weeks ago. The engagements are part of SASSCAL's broader effort to strengthen regional cooperation in climate research, data sharing, and sustainable land management.

SASSCAL INITIATES SADC MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION

Group photo of the delegation during the meeting between SASSCAL representatives and senior officials from Malawi's Ministry of Natural Resources

SASSCAL has launched a new initiative to expand its membership to all countries in the Southern African region. This move follows a decision by the SASSCAL Council to promote broader regional inclusion and strengthen cooperation on climate and environmental issues.

As part of this effort, a SASSCAL delegation visited the Government of Malawi on 18 February 2026 in Lilongwe. The purpose of the visit was to present SASSCAL's mandate and strategic goals, and to explore Malawi's possible participation in the initiative.

Ms. Alexandria Angala, Vice-Chair of the SASSCAL Governing Board, pictured with Malawi's Principal Secretary for Natural Resources, Mr. Richard Perekamoyo, during the engagement

The delegation was led by Ms. Alexandria Angala, Vice-Chair of the SASSCAL Governing Board, on behalf of the Chairperson, Prof. Gabriel Miguel. The team also included Executive Director Prof. Nelago Indongo, Director of Science, Technology and Human Capacity Development Dr. Budzanani Tacheba, and Board Secretary and Legal Advisor Ms. Johanna Mumangeni.

During the meeting, Ms. Angala said climate change does not respect national borders and that countries in Southern Africa face many of the same environmental challenges. She explained that stronger regional cooperation through SASSCAL would help countries improve their efforts to adapt to and reduce the impacts of climate change. Prof. Indongo added that expanding SASSCAL's membership would encourage countries to share research, data and expertise. This would help avoid duplication of work and improve coordinated climate action across the region. The initiative was welcomed by Malawi's Principal Secretary for Natural Resources, Mr. Richard Perekamoyo. He said the Southern African region faces common climate challenges that require joint solutions. He also highlighted the importance of working together to improve preparedness and resilience.

The SASSCAL Executive Director delivering a presentation on the organisation's mandate and operations during the engagement

Also present at the meeting were Mr. Ben Yassi, Deputy Director of the Environmental Affairs Department, and Dr. Maggie Muthali, Research Fellow at the MwAPATA Institute.

The engagement marks an important step toward stronger regional cooperation and united climate action across Southern Africa.

RESEARCH AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

ZAMBIA HOSTS FIRST SASSCAL 2.0 CLIMATE CHANGE DIALOGUE

Participants at the SASSCAL 2.0 Climate Change Dialogue in Kabwe, Zambia

KABWE, Zambia – More than 60 researchers, policymakers, government officials, students, and development partners gathered in Kabwe from 4 to 5 June 2026 for the first SASSCAL 2.0 Climate Change Dialogue in Zambia.

The event provided a platform for participants to discuss how scientific research can help strengthen climate change responses in Zambia and across Southern Africa. It also served as an opportunity to review progress made under the SASSCAL 2.0 Research Programme, share experiences and innovations, and identify practical solutions for building resilience in forestry, agriculture, food security, and water resources management.

Mr. Justin Kapenda delivering his keynote remarks

Mr. Justin Kapenda delivering keynote remarks on behalf of the Central Province Deputy Permanent Secretary at the SASSCAL 2.0 Climate Change Dialogue Speaking on behalf of Zambia's Central Province Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mr. Godfrey Chitambala, Mr. Justin Kapenda highlighted the importance of SASSCAL in strengthening regional capacity to generate and use scientific knowledge for climate change adaptation and sustainable land management.

He noted that Central Province, a region largely dependent on smallholder farming and livestock production, has been heavily affected by climate change. He referred to the severe 2023–2024 drought, which was declared a national disaster, as a clear example of the growing challenges facing farming communities.

"The impacts of climate change are becoming more visible every year. Scientific research and innovation are critical in helping communities adapt and build resilience," he said.

The SASSCAL 2.0 Research Programme, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space with an investment of €10 million, was implemented between 2022 and 2025 across the five SASSCAL member countries: Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zambia. The programme consists of 13 research projects addressing key climate and environmental challenges in the region.

Mr. Kapenda explained that the dialogue was designed to hear directly from researchers, policymakers, community members, stakeholders, and partners about the programme's achievements, lessons learned, and future opportunities.

Mr. John Lukonde Chongo, SASSCAL Alternate Board Member for Zambia, addresses participants during the SASSCAL 2.0 Climate Change Dialogue

SASSCAL Alternate Board Member for Zambia, Mr. John Lukonde Chongo, emphasized the value of regional cooperation in addressing climate change.

"The Ministry of Technology and Science views partnerships such as SASSCAL as an important form of science diplomacy. Through collaboration, shared research, open data, and knowledge exchange, we can better address the environmental challenges facing our region," he said.

During the event, SASSCAL Executive Director, Prof. Nelago Indongo, officially launched the Call for Book Chapters for the SASSCAL 2.0 Research Programme. She said the dialogue demonstrated SASSCAL's commitment to ensuring that research findings are translated into practical knowledge that can benefit communities and decision-makers.

SASSCAL Executive Director, Prof. Nelago Indongo, speaking during the official opening of the SASSCAL 2.0 Climate Change Dialogue

"This dialogue presents an opportunity to discuss how we can sustainably use our natural resources to improve livelihoods, strengthen food security, and promote environmental sustainability," she said. "SASSCAL 2.0 is not only about producing scientific publications but also about ensuring that research findings are understood and applied by society."

The event also highlighted some of the practical impacts of SASSCAL-supported research. Mulungushi University Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Chansa Chomba Chomba, highlighted the success of SASSCAL's Beekeeping Project, which is being implemented under the SASSCAL 2.0 Research Programme at the University.

Prof. Chansa Chomba, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation at Mulungushi University, delivering his remarks during the event

He revealed that the project currently produces processed organic liquid honey supplied to Shoprite stores across Zambia and is exploring opportunities to enter international markets. The university also produces beeswax products and is preparing to launch honey biscuits and BeeLux soap for sensitive skin after successfully completing the required certification processes. Prof. Chomba said the project demonstrates how research can be transformed into sustainable economic opportunities for local communities.

The Zambia Climate Change Dialogue is the first in a series of national dialogues planned under SASSCAL 2.0. Similar events are expected to take place in Angola, Botswana, and Namibia in the coming months.

NAMIBIA LAUNCHES CLIMATE MODELLING PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN ADAPTATION PLANNING

Participants pictured during the inception meeting

A new climate modelling and projections project aimed at improving Namibia's response to climate change has officially begun. The project was introduced during an inception meeting hosted by the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) on 15 April 2026 in Windhoek. The meeting brought together representatives from government, the private sector, academic institutions, and financial organisations.

The project has been awarded to SASSCAL, which will lead a team of national and regional experts. It is funded under Namibia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) programme by the Green Climate Fund, with oversight from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT).

SASSCAL will work with several partners, including the Global Change Institute, the University of Namibia, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, and the Namibia University of Science and Technology.

The project will be carried out in two main phases. In the first phase, experts will develop detailed climate projections for Namibia. These will include high-resolution data on key climate factors such as temperature and rainfall, based on different global emissions scenarios.

The aim is to better understand how climate change could affect the country in the future, including extreme weather events.

Prof. Francois Engelbrecht, Principal Investigator of the SASSCAL 2.0 Research Programme for the TIPEECC Project, delivers a presentation at the meeting

In the second phase, the findings will be used to assess risks to important sectors such as water resources, ecosystems, land use, marine environments, and human well-being. This will help provide clear information to guide national adaptation planning.

A strong focus of the project is building local skills and knowledge. Although the project will run for nine months, it includes plans for long-term capacity development. Two Namibian researchers will receive specialised training at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa.

All data and results from the project will be made freely available through SASSCAL and national platforms. The information will be tailored to support decision-making at different levels, from policymakers to local stakeholders.

This project is expected to play an important role in helping Namibia better prepare for the impacts of climate change.

AN UNUSUAL EL NIÑO EVENT IS PREDICTED

By Sylvia Thompson, Musonda Ng'onga, John Isaac Molefe, Baptista Joao, Budzanani Tacheba

As we report on this, El Niño conditions are already developing and being fuelled by unusually warm sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean.

El Niño and La Niña are natural opposing phenomena of the warm and cool phases of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle in the tropical Pacific Ocean. Their effects on winds and sea surface temperatures disrupt global weather patterns, affecting everything from rainfall to global temperatures (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2024).

El Niño and La Niña periods are defined using the Relative Oceanic Niño Index (RONI) and categorized, according to thresholds, into Weak, Moderate, Strong or Very Strong events (National Centers for Environmental Prediction / Climate Prediction Center (NCEP/CPC) 2026). ENSO Neutral conditions imply that neither the El Niño nor the La Niña phenomenon were present.

For 2026, NOAA forecasters predict a "highly elevated chance" of a historically powerful or so called "super El Niño" event developing in 2026, with an 82% likelihood of its onset between May and July and a 96% chance of conditions continuing through the Northern Hemisphere winter of 2026-2027.

In southern Africa, while the impacts may vary according to the time of year and the specific sub-region, El Niño generally fore spells negative anomalies, such as reduced rainfall (Caj et al 2025).

More specifically, it causes reduced rainfall during the main crop-growing season (December to March) and frequently causes delayed seasonal rains, prolonged mid-season dry spells, and elevated temperatures. Accordingly, the El Niño in southern Africa generally leads to agricultural and hydrological droughts. Resulting in devastating effects on crop and livestock production, and affecting water and food security in the region.

SASSCAL compared historic CHC (Climate Hazards Center) CHIRPS 3.0 monthly precipitation data from 1981 to 2025 to the NOAA Relative Oceanic Niño Index (RONI), to assess the impacts of different strengths of the El Niño phenomena against historic rainfall seasons.

Figure 1: below demonstrates, according to the respective quarterly values of the RONI, when, since 1981, El Niño and La Niña periods occurred and what their strength was. In this line, very strong El Niño events, similar to the one expected for 2026/27, occurred in 1982/83, in 1991 which developed from a strong to a very strong one by 1992, in 1997 which developed from a very strong to a strong one by 1998 and finally in 2015. Strong events occurred additionally in 1987 and 2016.

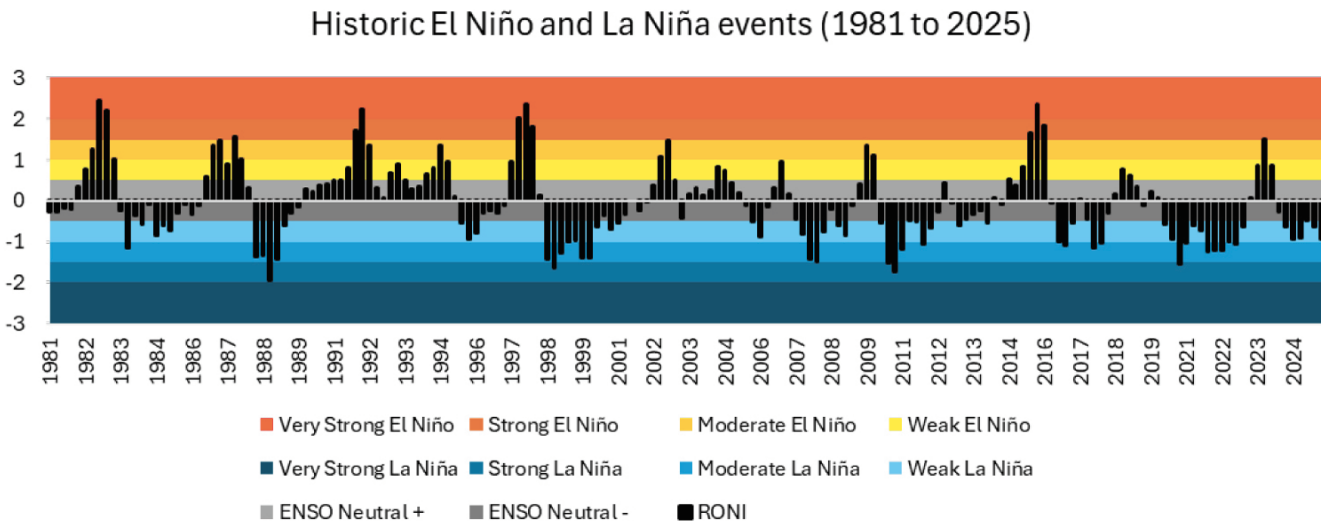
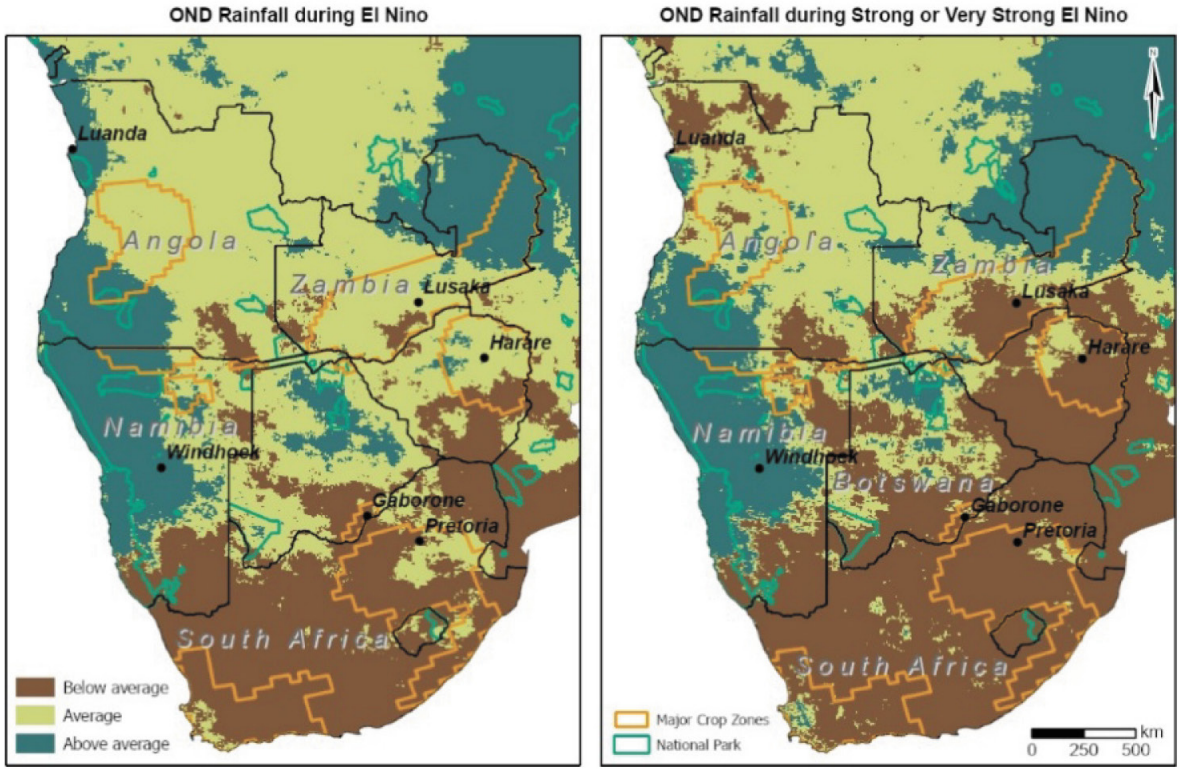


Figure 1: El Niño and La Niña periods are defined using the Relative Oceanic Niño Index (RONI) and categorized, according thresholds, into Weak, Moderate, Strong or Very Strong events

A comparison of El Niño events was undertaken on a quarterly basis, as the RONI data is also made available as quarterly figures. In this line, only the quarters relevant for the southern African summer rainfall season were considered: OND (October-November-December), JFM (January-February-March) and AMJ (April-May-June). The winter rainfall for South Africa's Cape Province was not assessed.



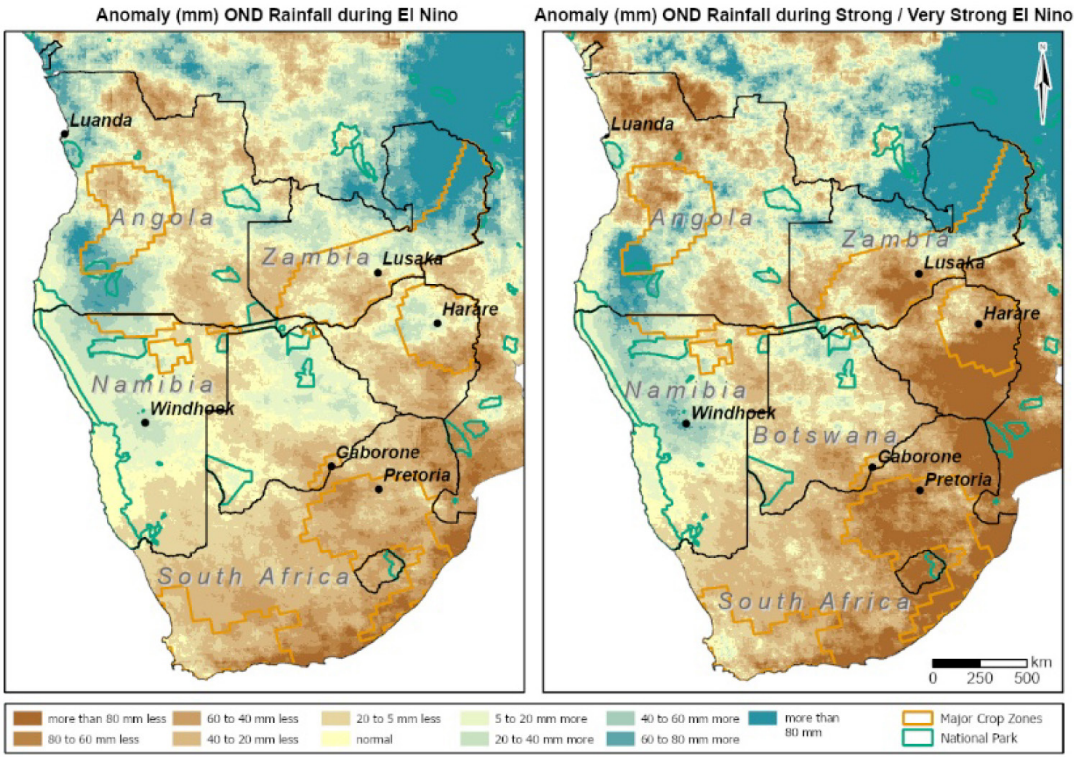
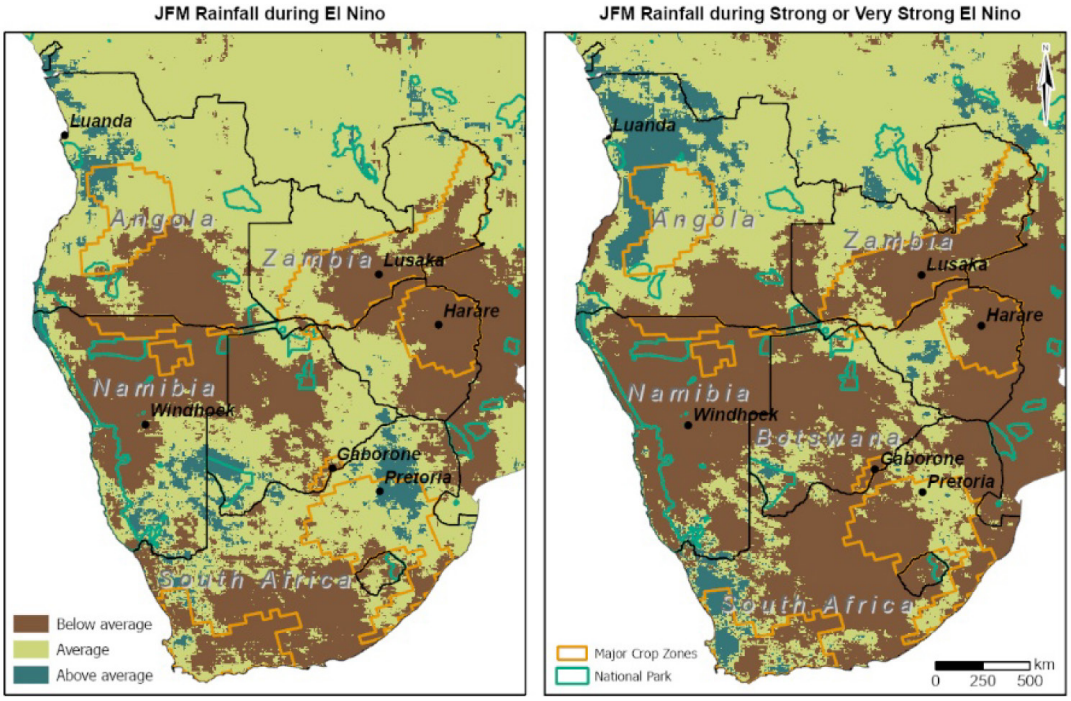


Figure 2: The deviation or anomaly from the normal total rainfall for the OND rainfall quarter

Figure 2 represents the deviation or anomaly from the average quarterly rainfall total for OND, from ENSO Neutral conditions, under weak to very strong El Niño conditions and finally under only strong and very strong El Niño conditions.

These maps suggest, that under El Niño conditions, particularly the drier regions of southern Africa (Namibia, Botswana, much of South Africa, southern Zambia and much of Zimbabwe) are affected by lower rainfalls during this quarter. However, areas close to the coastline in Angola and Namibia, Angola's central south and Namibia's north central and central areas appear to be positively affected by the conditions. Similarly, north eastern Zambia appears to receive more rainfall.



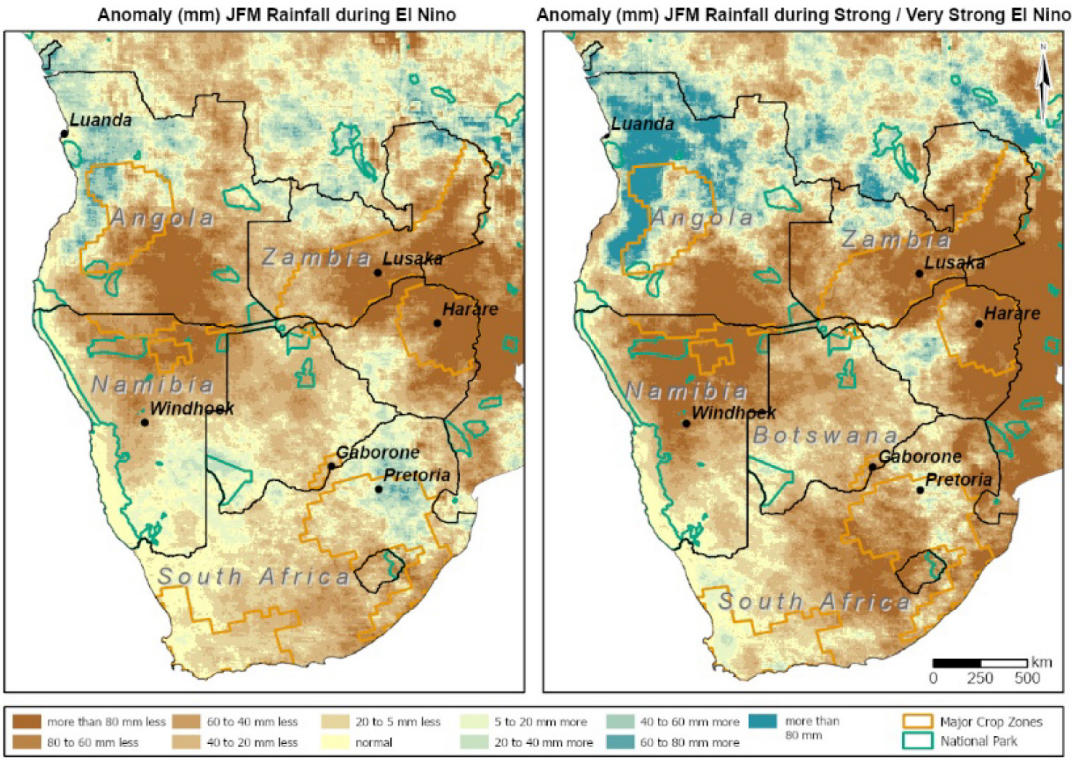


Figure 3: The deviation or anomaly from the normal total rainfall for the JFM rainfall quarter

Figure 3 represents the deviation or anomaly from the average quarterly rainfall total for JFM under all El Niño conditions and under only strong or very strong El Niño conditions. These maps suggest, that during the JFM period, again large parts of southern Africa are negatively affected by the phenomenon, with generally drier conditions. Notably, even more enhanced drier conditions during strong and very strong El Niño conditions. Some areas are however conversely affected with wetter conditions, specifically Angola's north west, the confluence of Namibia's, Botswana's and South Africa's border at the Kgalagadi and western Zimbabwe, depending on the strength of the phenomenon.

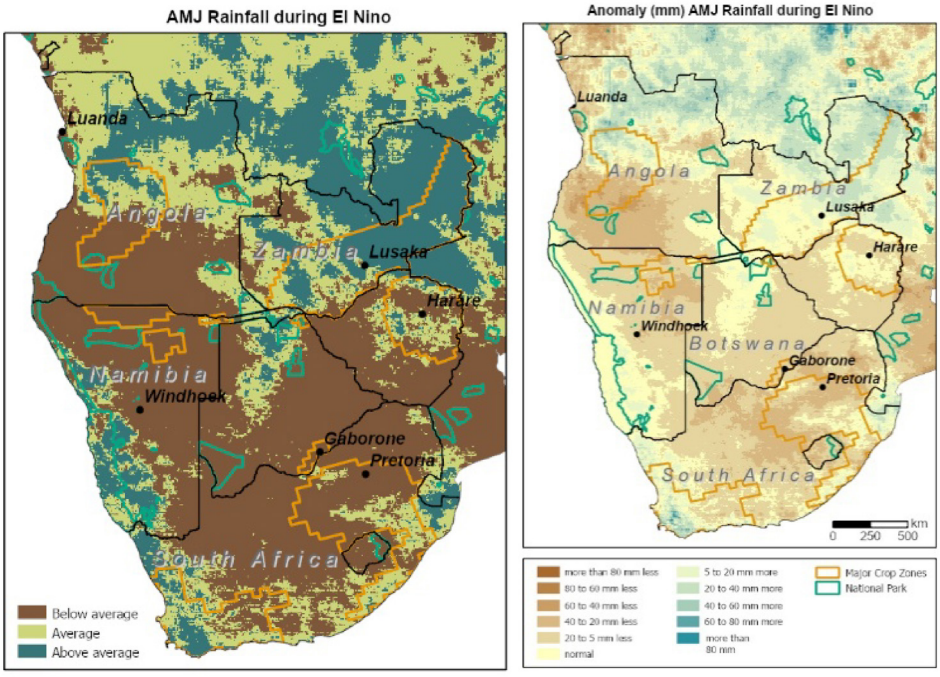


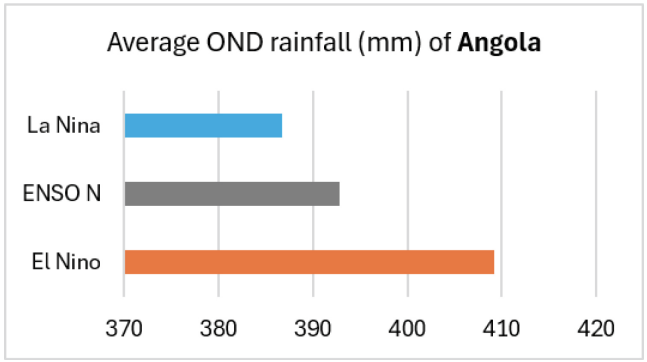
Figure 4: The deviation or anomaly from the normal total rainfall for the AMJ rainfall quarter

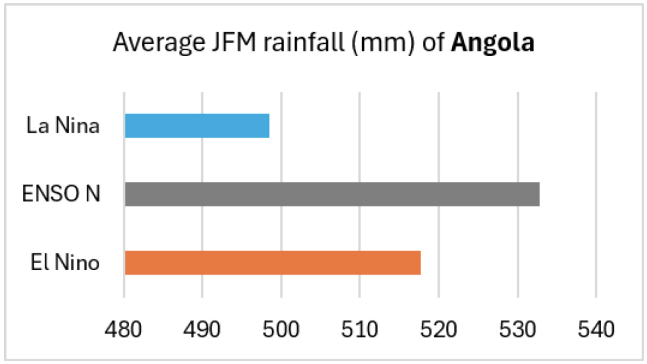
Finally, Figure 4, depicts the AMJ rainfall quarter, which for most of southern Africa, is notably a drier quarter, with the rainfall season generally subsiding by mid April, and May and June being dry winter months with no notable rainfall. The figures however again suggest drier conditions for much of southern Africa, but wetter conditions along the south western and western coastline and over northern Angola and central and north eastern Zambia.

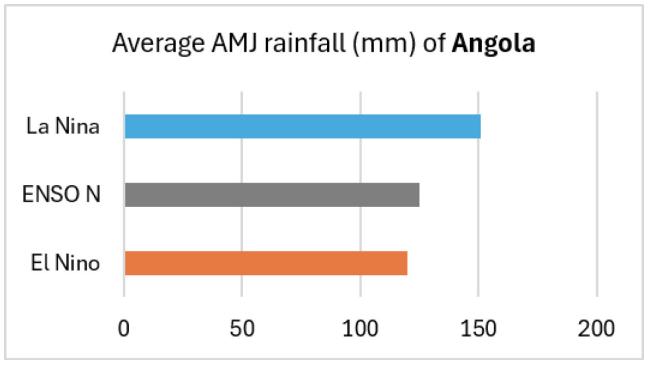
As a rough indicator of the expected quantitative impact, by country, the averaged national graphs of the quarterly total rainfall during the OND, JFM and AMJ periods, in Figure 5, were derived to compare ENSO neutral, El Niño and La Niña conditions. It can be confidently deduced, that generally, for almost each quarter of the rainfall season, for Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, El Niño brings lower than normal rainfall while La Niña brings higher than normal rainfall. And La Niña brings consistently higher average rainfall for those countries than the El Niño phenomenon.

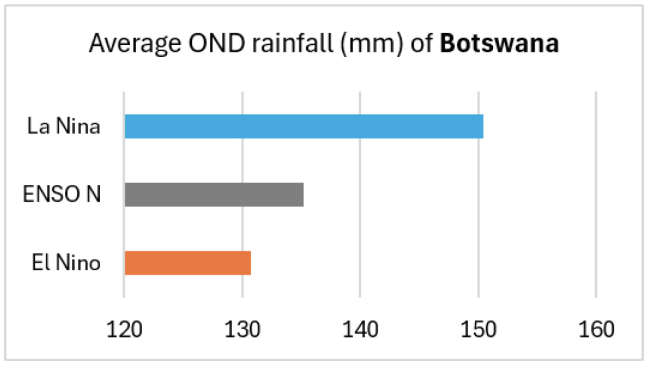
For Angola and Zambia, the influence of the El Niño and La Niña phenomenon are different and do not consistently imply below average or above average rainfall per quarter.

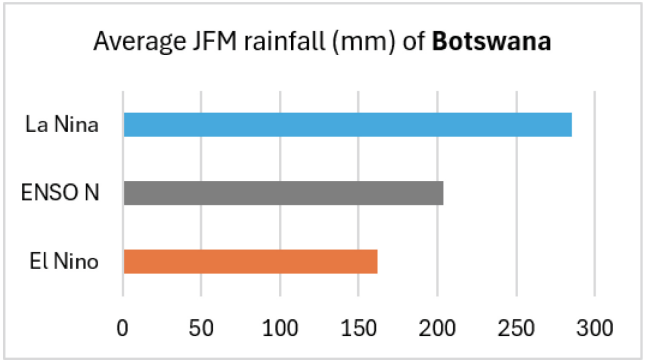
While these graphs are averaged over the entire country, and do not account for regional variations, they do clearly indicate that the predictions for a likely unprecedented super El Niño should be heeded with prudence and should prompt relevant planning and preparedness by the affected Governments and regional bodies

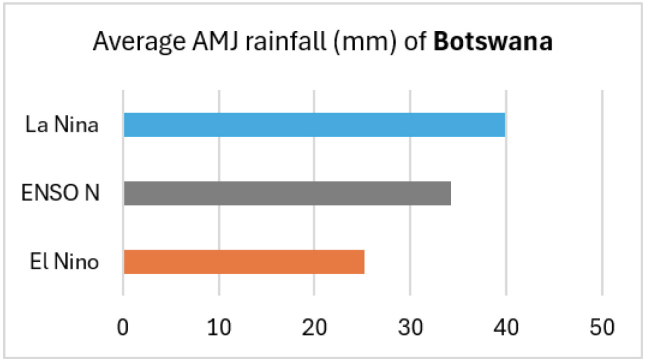


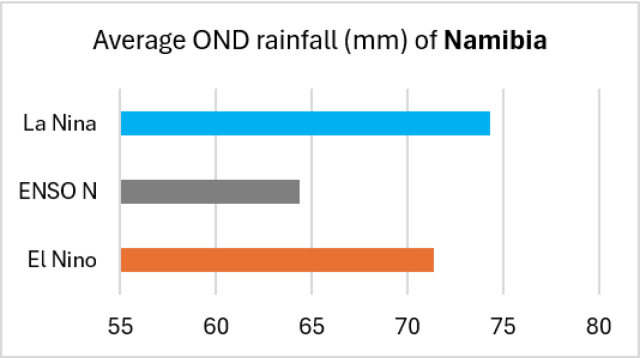


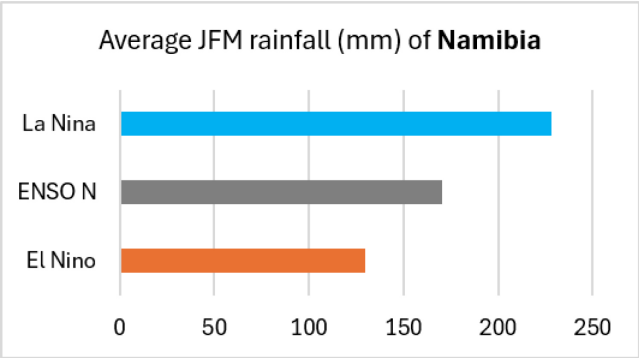


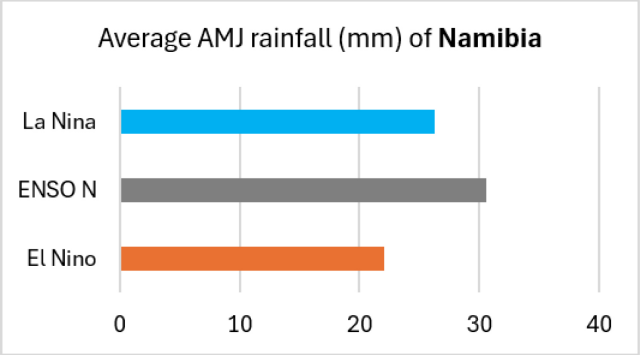


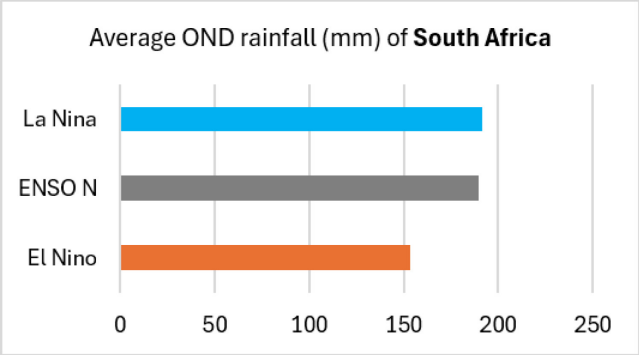


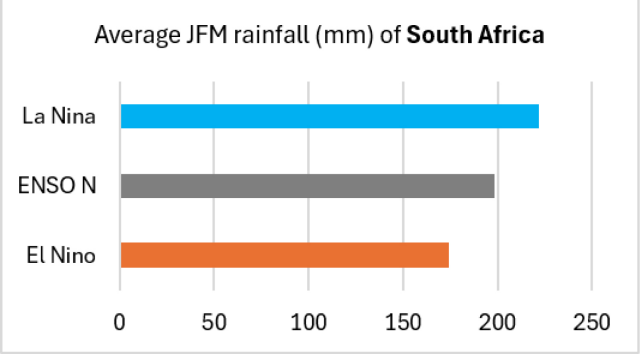


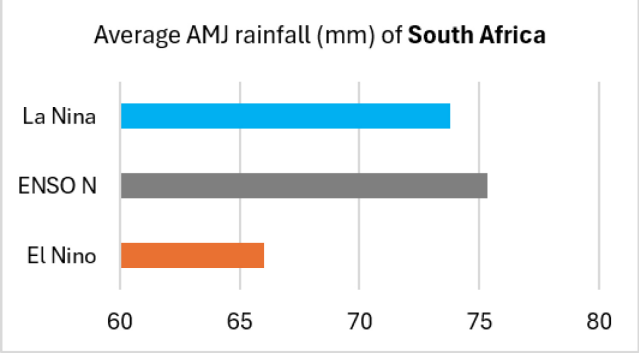

Average OND rainfall (mm) of **Namibia**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
55
60
65
70
75
80

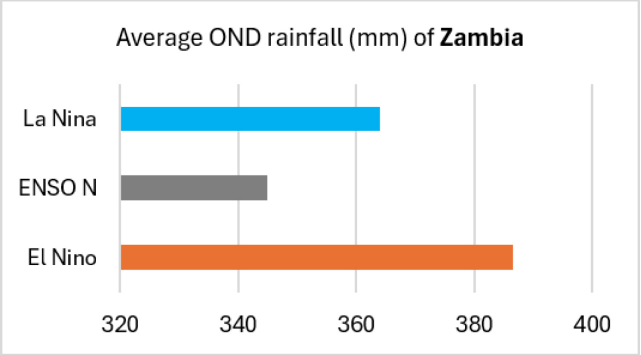

Average JFM rainfall (mm) of **Namibia**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
0
50
100
150
200
250

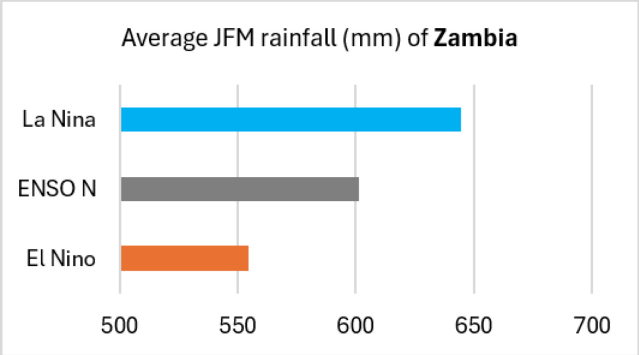

Average AMJ rainfall (mm) of **Namibia**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
0
10
20
30
40

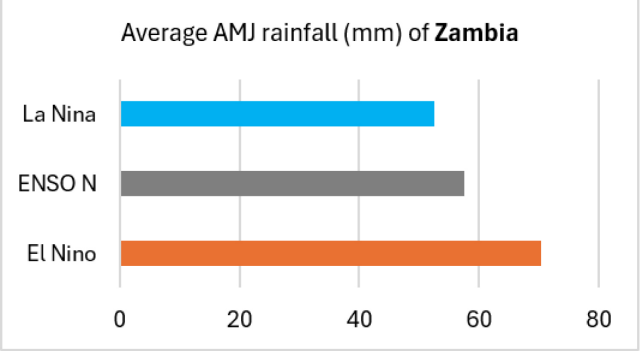

Average OND rainfall (mm) of **South Africa**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
0
50
100
150
200
250

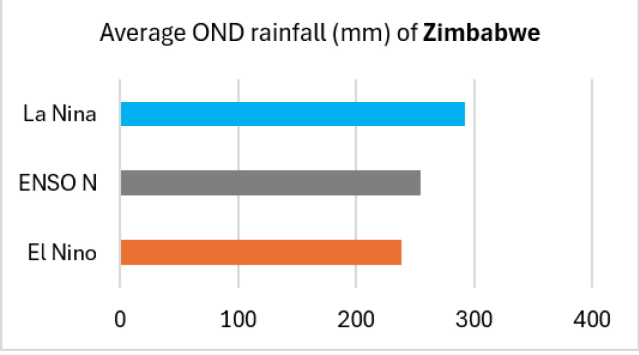

Average JFM rainfall (mm) of **South Africa**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
0
50
100
150
200
250


Average AMJ rainfall (mm) of **South Africa**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
60
65
70
75
80


Average OND rainfall (mm) of **Zambia**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
320
340
360
380
400


Average JFM rainfall (mm) of **Zambia**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
500
550
600
650
700


Average AMJ rainfall (mm) of **Zambia**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
0
20
40
60
80


Average OND rainfall (mm) of **Zimbabwe**
La Nina
ENSO N
El Nino
0
100
200
300
400

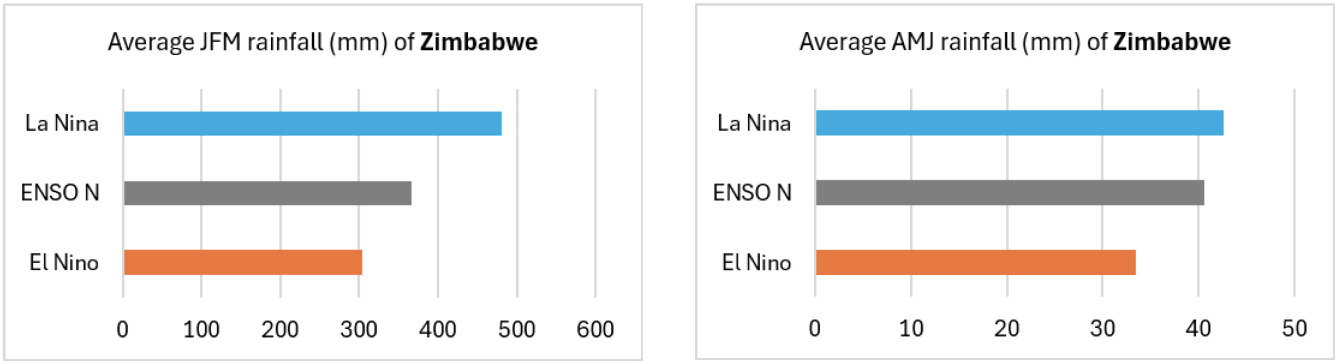


Figure 5: The average national rainfall total of quarterly rainfall during periods of the El Niño and La Niña phenomenon versus periods that are ENSO neutral.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AND PROJECTS

NAMIBIA INAUGURATES THIRD COHORT OF TVET GREEN HYDROGEN SCHOLARSHIP BENEFICIARIES FROM HARDAP AND ||KHARAS REGIONS

Some of the beneficiaries of the TVET Green Hydrogen Scholarship Programme pose for a group photo with Hon. Dino Ballotti, Deputy Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport and Culture, during the inauguration of the third cohort of scholarship recipients

Stampriet, Hardap Region – 19 July 2026

Namibia has taken another important step towards building a skilled workforce for the emerging green hydrogen sector with the inauguration of the third cohort of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Green Hydrogen Scholarship beneficiaries from the Hardap and ||Kharas regions.

The scholarship programme is part of the cooperation between the Governments of Namibia and Germany under the Joint Communiqué of Intent (JCoI), signed in 2022. The agreement promotes collaboration in several strategic areas, including the development of skills needed to support Namibia's growing green hydrogen industry. SASSCAL serves as the implementing agency for the JCoI.

The inauguration ceremony was held at the AIMS Vocational Training Centre in Stampriet and was officiated by the Deputy Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport and Culture, Hon. Dino Ballotti, on behalf of the Vice President of Namibia.

Building Skills for Namibia's Future

The Youth for Green Hydrogen Scholarship Programme was launched to equip young Namibians with the knowledge and technical skills required to participate in the country's green industrialisation journey.

The first scholarship call, launched in 2022, awarded 93 full scholarships, mainly supporting postgraduate studies in renewable energy and green hydrogen-related fields.

In 2023, the second scholarship call expanded opportunities to 90 beneficiaries from all 14 regions of Namibia. The programme placed a strong focus on technical and vocational training, youth empowerment, inclusion of persons with disabilities, and participation from historically disadvantaged communities.

The third cohort builds on these achievements by focusing specifically on youth from the Hardap and ||Kharas regions. The initiative was made possible through funding of more than N$25 million from the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Investing in Local Communities

Speaking at the event, Hon. Ballotti expressed gratitude to the Government and people of Germany for their continued support and partnership.

"This collaboration is a powerful example of how international cooperation can contribute to sustainable development, skills transfer, and youth empowerment," he said.

The 90 scholarship beneficiaries inaugurated during the ceremony will receive training in critical technical fields, including:

Electrical Engineering
Welding
Plumbing
Pipefitting
Boilermaking
Fitting and Turning
Automotive Mechatronics

Solar Energy Systems Installation

Hon. Dino Ballotti, Deputy Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport and Culture, delivering his remarks during the inauguration of the third cohort of the TVET Green Hydrogen Scholarship beneficiaries in Stampriet, Hardap Region

According to Hon. Ballotti, these skills are essential for Namibia's industrial development and will play a key role in unlocking future economic opportunities.

He noted that the decision to focus the third cohort on Hardap and ||Kharas was strategic, as both regions are expected to become important centres of economic activity as Namibia advances its renewable energy ambitions and green industrialisation agenda.

By investing in young people from these regions, the Government is ensuring that local communities are well-positioned to benefit from future employment and business opportunities arising from the green hydrogen sector.

Strong Interest from the Youth

Delivering remarks at the ceremony, SASSCAL Executive Director, Prof. Nelago Indongo, highlighted the overwhelming response received following the launch of the scholarship call in June 2025 by Her Excellency, Vice President Lucia Witbooi in Gibeon.

Following the launch, SASSCAL and the Green Hydrogen Programme conducted extensive awareness campaigns across all constituencies in Hardap and ||Kharas to encourage eligible youth to apply.

The outreach efforts resulted in more than 5,000 applications being received from across the two regions.

SASSCAL Executive Director, Prof. Nelago Indongo, delivering her remarks during the inauguration of the third cohort of the TVET Green Hydrogen Scholarship beneficiaries in Stampriet, Hardap Region

Prof. Indongo explained that all applications underwent a rigorous verification and screening process before being evaluated by a multi-stakeholder selection committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport, Arts and Culture, the Hardap and ||Kharas Regional Councils, and SASSCAL.

After a comprehensive assessment process, 90 successful applicants were selected and awarded scholarships.

"The successful completion of this process reflects our collective commitment to transparency, accountability, and equal opportunity," said Prof. Indongo.

She congratulated the beneficiaries for taking the initiative to apply and enrol in vocational training programmes that will contribute to Namibia's green industrialisation goals.

Some of the TVET Green Hydrogen Scholarship beneficiaries pictured during the inauguration ceremony of the third cohort in Stampriet, Hardap Region

Training Institutions

The beneficiaries have been enrolled at three participating vocational training institutions:

- AIMS Vocational Training Centre, Stampriet
- Johanna Jacobs Vocational Training Centre, Gibeon
- NIMT Keetmanshoop

The students were placed according to their chosen fields of study and career interests while addressing the skills needs of the emerging green hydrogen and industrialisation sectors.

A Partnership for Future Generations

Prof. Indongo thanked the Governments of Namibia and Germany, the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport, Arts and Culture, the Hardap and ||Kharas Regional Councils, the Green Hydrogen Programme, SASSCAL, and all stakeholders involved in making the initiative a success.

Distinguished guests and senior officials pictured during the inauguration ceremony of the third cohort of the TVET Green Hydrogen Scholarship Programme

"Together, we are building the skilled workforce that will support Namibia's green industrialisation and create opportunities for future generations," she said.

The event also featured welcoming remarks by Hardap Regional Governor, Hon. Riaan Charles McNab, who welcomed guests and beneficiaries to the region and congratulated the students on this important milestone in their educational and professional journeys.

The inauguration of the third cohort marks another significant step in preparing Namibian youth for careers in renewable energy and green hydrogen while ensuring that local communities are actively included in the country's future economic development.

SASSCAL EXHIBIT AT THE 2026 SADC SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK

The Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL) took part in the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week, which was held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 23 to 27 February 2026.

The event brought together policymakers, industry leaders, investors, researchers, and innovators from across the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It aimed to promote dialogue, innovation, and collaboration in sustainable energy development.

SASSCAL also participated as an exhibitor, showcasing its work in green hydrogen, climate change research, capacity development, and other key programmes. Through its exhibition, SASSCAL also highlighted ongoing projects, research outputs, and innovative solutions that support clean and sustainable energy development in the region.

During that week, SASSCAL representatives will joined the panel discussions and technical sessions on emerging trends in sustainable energy. These discussions provided valuable insights to support informed decision-making and encourage innovative approaches within the energy sector.

The event further offered opportunities for networking with key decision-makers and stakeholders from across the green hydrogen and sustainable energy value chain.

These interactions are expected to strengthen partnerships and support regional efforts toward a cleaner and more sustainable energy future.

Go Green. Go Africa

STAFF WELLNESS UPDATE

PROF. INDONGO CALLS FOR TRANSFORMATION AT SASSCAL ALL STAFF RETREAT IN SWAKOPMUND

SASSCAL staff pictured during the All Staff Retreat held in Swakopmund, Namibia, from 9–13 February 2026

The Executive Director of the Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL), Prof. Nelago Indongo, has called on staff to embrace change and commit to building a high-performing organisation.

She made these remarks during the opening of the All SASSCAL Staff Retreat, held from 9 to 13 February 2026 in Swakopmund, Namibia. The retreat brought together staff from the Regional Secretariat and National Nodes in Angola, Botswana, Namibia and Zambia.

"As we begin 2026, I hope you are truly prepared to be part of this winning team," Prof. Indongo said. "This is not a team of laziness or negativity. It is not a team that complains without offering solutions. There is no room for internal sabotage or a 'business as usual' mindset. This is a team of progress. A team of transformation.

A team that understands that change is inevitable and chooses to embrace it."

During the five-day retreat, staff finalised the 2026 Annual Operational Plan. They also aligned their individual performance agreements with the new plan and completed the signing of performance contracts.

Executive Director, Prof. Nelago Indongo, delivering her opening remarks at the Staff Retreat

Prof. Indongo informed staff that the newly revamped organisational structure has now been fully approved.

All positions have been filled following an extensive recruitment process carried out over the past few months.

The 2026 Annual Operational Plan focuses on five key areas: Research Management and Infrastructure Development; Expansion, Growth and Impact; Human Capacity Development; Resource Mobilisation and Financial Sustainability; and Policy Advocacy, Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships.

The Executive Director stressed that the organisation is entering a period of real transformation. "This is not about small adjustments or doing the same work slightly better," she said. "It is about rethinking how we operate, how we serve and how we create impact. It may feel uncomfortable, but it is necessary."

Staff engaging in discussions and activities to consolidate and finalise the 2026 Annual Operational Plan

She encouraged staff to see transformation as an opportunity to grow professionally, learn new skills and contribute to a future-focused organisation. She also highlighted the need for digital processes, noting that the era of signing piles of printed paper should come to an end.

"Everything we do must serve the greater good of SASSCAL," she said. "We are not here simply for a job. We are here to ensure that SASSCAL thrives and positions itself among the best."

Prof. Indongo further urged staff to uphold the organisation's core values of professionalism, integrity and trust in their daily work and interactions.

Staff pictured after participating in outdoor team-building activities

In addition to strategic discussions, the retreat included indoor and outdoor team-building activities. Prof. Indongo said these activities were intentional and important.

"We cannot deliver excellent results if we are not well," she said. "We need to be fit and healthy – physically, mentally and emotionally. This retreat gave us the opportunity to reconnect, reset and strengthen our collaboration as one team."

The retreat concluded with a renewed sense of purpose, as staff committed themselves to driving transformation and delivering impact in 2026 and beyond.

NAMIBIA NODE WELCOMES NEWLY APPOINTED SASSCAL PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

SASSCAL has appointed Mr. Kosmas Enkali Shilongo as the new Programme Coordinator for the Namibia Node, effective 1 January 2026.

Mr. Shilongo joins SASSCAL from the Dryland Sustainable Landscape Impact Programme, where he served as National Project Coordinator. He brings with him extensive experience from both the public and non-governmental sectors, having previously worked with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, and the World Wide Fund for Nature – Namibia.

He holds a Master's degree in Environmental Management from the University of the Free State in South Africa, a Bachelor of Technology in Natural Resources from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, and a National Diploma in Natural Resources (Nature Conservation) from the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).

Mr. Shilongo is currently a PhD candidate at NUST, where he is pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Natural Resource Sciences. SASSCAL welcomes Mr. Shilongo and wishes him every success as he takes on this important role.

SASSCAL APPOINTS DR. ROSALINA CARLOS BENGUI AS SCIENTIFIC OFFICER AT THE ANGOLA NATIONAL NODE

SASSCAL is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Rosalina Carlos Bengui as Scientific Officer at the Angola National Node, effective 01 February 2026.

Dr. Rosalina Carlos Bengui is an Agronomist and a specialist in food security and natural resource management, with a solid academic background that includes a Master's degree in Plant Genetic Resources and a PhD in Agricultural Sciences.

With over 10 years of technical and strategic experience, she has built her career leading highly complex projects in the Education, Agriculture, and Environment sectors. Her most recent role as National Project Coordinator at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) stands out, where, for four years, she led multidisciplinary teams in initiatives focused on environmental conservation, sustainable food production, environmental impact studies, and scientific research.

Her international career includes experience in scientific research and teaching in Brazil and Angola, as well as a strategic role at FAS (Institute for Local Development). As a manager, she successfully led projects funded by the European Union, the African Development Bank, and the World Bank, generating tangible results for scientific development and the climate resilience of communities in Angola and internationally.

SASSCAL wishes Dr. Bengui every success as she takes on this important role.

SASSCAL WELCOMES NEWLY APPOINTED RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND FUNDRAISING SPECIALIST

SASSCAL appointed Mr. Thaddeus Shigwedha as Resource Mobilization and Fundraising Specialist at the Regional Secretariat in Windhoek, Namibia, effective 1 February 2026. He served in this role until the end of May 2026, when he left the institution.

Mr. Shigwedha joins SASSCAL from Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance in Geneva, where he served as Programme Manager managing a USD 250M+ technical assistance portfolio and was also responsible for Funding Design and Review.

He brings extensive experience in unlisted investment management, strategic resource mobilization, and partnership development from both the Private sector, multilateral organizations, and the development sector, having previously worked with the Secretariat of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Geneva and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

He holds a Master of Laws (LL.M.) from the University of San Francisco, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Finance & Strategy from Midlands State University, and is a Certified ESG Practitioner. He is currently finalizing a PhD in Sustainable Development from the University of Otago.

Mr. Shigwedha is a Prosci Certified Change Practitioner with professional certifications including Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and Project Management Professional (PMP®).
SASSCAL welcomes Mr. Shigwedha and wishes him every success as he takes on this important role.

FROM SGSP–IWRM ALUMNI TO SCIENTIFIC OFFICER — WELCOMING DR. OTLAADISA TAFILA TO SASSCAL'S BOTSWANA NODE

Dr. Otlaadisa Tafila is an accomplished geoscientist with over a decade of multidisciplinary experience spanning academic research, mineral exploration and mining, and Integrated Water Resources Management.

He joined SASSCAL on 1 January 2026, following the successful completion of his PhD in Spatial Science under the SASSCAL Graduate Studies Programme in Integrated Water Resources Management (SGSP–IWRM) at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).

As a Geospatial Scientist and water resources specialist, Dr. Tafila brings a strong academic foundation in Earth sciences. He holds a Master of Science in Environmental Science (Geospatial Science), sponsored by SASSCAL, and a Bachelor of Science in Applied Geophysics.

Before advancing his academic career, Dr. Tafila gained valuable industry experience in mineral exploration across Botswana, Mozambique, and Zambia, where he developed hands-on expertise in geophysical survey techniques, data collection, and analysis. He has worked with multidisciplinary teams on subsurface mapping and groundwater exploration projects for both research and private sector clients, making extensive use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to plan surveys and manage spatial data.

Beyond research, Dr. Tafila has demonstrated a strong commitment to teaching and mentorship, serving as a teaching assistant and laboratory demonstrator at the University of Botswana. His research interests include hydrogeology, hydrology, GIS and remote sensing, water governance and finance, and climate adaptation and mitigation.

SASSCAL wishes him continued success in his new role.

SASSCAL

Southern African
Science Service Centre for
Climate Change and
Adaptive Land Management

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