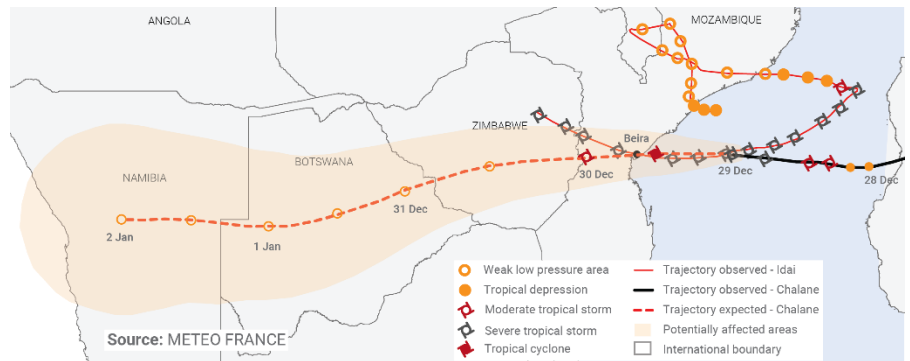


HIGHLIGHTS

- Tropical Storm Chalane is expected to strengthen overnight and make landfall in central Mozambique in the early hours of 30 December.
- Chalane could hit areas of Sofala Province affected by Cyclone Idai nearly two years ago, bringing heavy rains and winds, and subsequent flooding.
- After crossing Mozambique, the weather system is projected to move towards Zimbabwe, while the country is already expected to experience heavy rains ahead of the weather system's arrival.



SITUATION OVERVIEW

Tropical Storm Chalane was located in the Mozambique Channel on 29 December, as it continued to move west. The storm is projected to make landfall in Mozambique's Sofala province—which was struck by Cyclone Idai in March 2019—between the districts of Muanza and Buzi, near Dondo and Beira, in the early hours of 30 December 2020, with winds of 130 km/h and gusts up to 150 km/h, according to the latest projections from Mozambique's National Institute of Meteorology (INAM). Some projections indicate that Chalane could strengthen to a Tropical Cyclone prior to landfall.

Chalane could bring heavy rains, winds and flooding across the provinces of Sofala, Manica, Zambezia and Inhambane. The storm is expected to pass through Nhamatanda District in Sofala Province, then Gondola District in Manica Province, subsequently affecting Macate and Sussudenga districts, before entering Zimbabwe. As a precautionary measure, Beira port has been closed for navigation and trucks from 29 to 31 December. Mozambican Airlines (LAM) have cancelled several flights on 29 and 30 December arriving to or departing from Tete, Quelimane, Beira, Nampula and Chimoio.

According to the latest predictions, Chalane will weaken to a tropical depression as it will enter Zimbabwe in the evening of 30 December. Chimanimani and Chipinge districts—which were hardest-hit by Cyclone Idai—are among the districts most at-risk. According to the Meteorological Services Department (MSD), Chalane will bring rains across the country from 30 December 2020 to 1 January 2021, with heavy downpours of more than 50mm in 24 hours expected in locations along the Eastern Highlands. Heavy rain could result in: flash flooding in areas of poor drainage and along river basins; mudslides and landslides; and collapse of walls, due to excessive moisture, according to MSD.

HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE

In Mozambique, the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) is pre-positioning teams and resources in Sofala, Manica, Inhambane and Zambezia provinces. Operational Emergency Centres have been activated at provincial level and the INCG has issued alerts asking the population in potentially affected areas to take precautionary measures. INGC has pre-positioned 36 boats and fuel, search and rescue teams, six movable bridges, and a plane. Food and non-food items were pre-positioned in all districts in order to be able to respond in the first 72 hours, as and where needed. Humanitarian partners are meeting daily with Government counterparts to ensure optimal readiness to respond.

In Zimbabwe, the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and Housing convened a meeting on 29 December 2020 to discuss preparedness for the arrival of Chalane. People who remained displaced after Cyclone Idai are being transported to evacuation centres in Chimanimani, Manicaland Province. Flash flood prone areas, including major river catchment areas in Manicaland Province, are being closely monitored as they pose high flood risks. Humanitarian partners have identified available stocks for a possible response across all critical sectors and are preparing for possible assessments.

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