

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2009/10

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: August 1 - 10, 2009



Government of The Gambia

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Working Group of the AGRHYMET Regional
Programme

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. PROGRESS OF RAINY SEASON

The Azores High Pressure Cell centred over the north west Atlantic Ocean had a mean core value of 1027.6 hectopascals (hpa), thus intensified by 2.1 hpa as compared to the preceding dekad, whereas the St. Helena High Pressure Cell centred over the south Atlantic Ocean had a mean core value of 1028.6 hpa thus weakened by 4.5 hpa as compared to the preceding dekad.

This pressure configuration however, favored the northward movement of the demarcating boundary between the dry and moist region over West Africa (Inter-Tropical Discontinuity - ITD) at its western and central axis, whereas the eastern axis maintained its position as in the last dekad. Thus, the ITD was located over Nouakchott (Mauritania), Tidjikta (Mauritania), Timbuktu (Mali) and Agadez (Niger).

2. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR AUGUST 11 - 20, 2009

Warm, humid and variably cloudiness condition will prevail with rain and/or thunderstorm over most places by the beginning (11th to 13th) and the end (16th, 17th, 19th and 20th) of the 2nd dekad of August 2009.

3. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, rainfall has seen an improvement, particularly in daily amounts as compared to the previous dekad. A single day highest downpour of over 240mm was recorded at Kerewan. As in the previous dekad, the number of rainy days varied between 3 and 8.

End-of-dekad totals ranged from 23.6mm at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third to 381.1mm at Kerewan in the Western Third of the country. Figure 1a depicts a high variation in the distribution of rainfall intensities during this dekad, with the western part recording more rainfall (over 100mm).

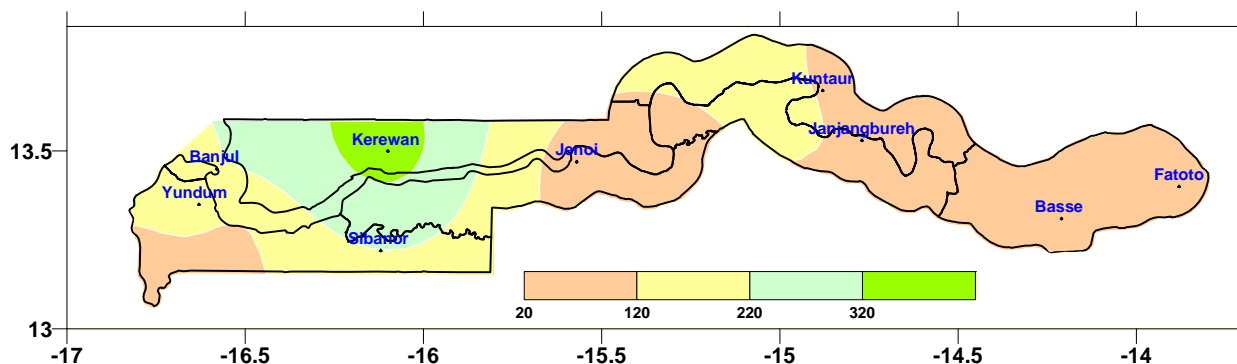


Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during August 1 - 10, 2009

As at August 10, 2009 the seasonal total rainfall amount in the country ranged from 143.2mm at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third to 835.3mm at Kerewan in the Western Third of the country (figure 1b). During the same period last year, the seasonal rainfall ranged from 217.7 at Pirang to 715.7 at Serekunda. This indicates deficits across the country ranging from 6.0mm to 439.0mm, except for Pirang, Kerewan and Kwinella, all in the Western Third and Kaur in the Middle Third which recorded surplus. The pattern of distribution within the country shows that the Western Third continued to lead in rainfall intensities than the Middle and Eastern Thirds.

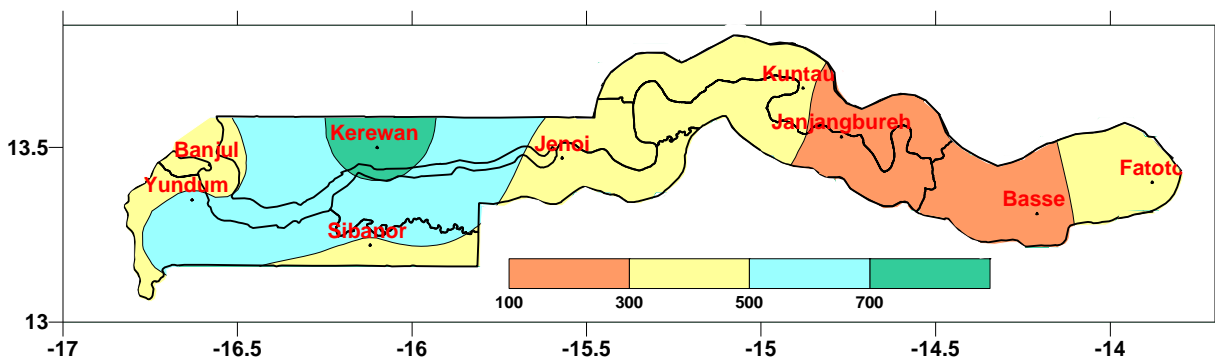


Figure 1b: Seasonal total from May 1 to August 10, 2009

In general, average rainfall from May 1 to August 10, 2009 remained below that of last year during the same period. *The country average as at August 10, 2009 was 423.6mm, compared to 450.5mm recorded during the same period last year. Meanwhile, this year's country average (423.6mm) is above the long-term mean (332.7mm) during the same period.*

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Like the previous dekad, this one saw a decrease in maximum temperatures from their values in the previous dekad. Highest temperatures ranged from 32.0°C at Banjul to 38.1°C at Janjangbureh. The trend remains the same for the minimum temperature with the highest of 22.8°C recorded at Fatoto and the lowest of 20.0°C at Banjul.

Maximum relative humidity (RH) continued to remain above 90% throughout the country.

Winds during the period were generally light to moderate in speed, with the passage of a line squall on the 8th August 2009. The highest wind speed recorded was 50km/hr at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third of the country.

<p>Composition of MWG: Department of Water Resources Department of Planning Services Department of Extension and Communication Services Department of Plant Protection Services Department of Animal Health and Production Services National Environment Agency</p>	<p>Direct your comments and questions to: The Director Department of Water Resources 7 Marina Parade, Banjul The Gambia Tel: (+ 220) 422 76 31/422 28 72/ 422 41 22 Email: dwr@yahoo.com</p>
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