

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2010/04

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: June 1 - 10, 2010



Government of The Gambia

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. SEASONAL CLIMATE FORECAST FOR THE YEAR 2010 OVER THE GAMBIA

The Department of Water Resources is pleased to present the climate forecast for this wet season (2010). As in the past years, this product is the result of collaboration with the National Meteorological Services within the sub-region and beyond.

· 2010 Rainfall Prediction

For the coming July-August-September (JAS) period, the expected rainfall values would be **Above Normal** (most likely) to **Near-normal** (likely). However, considerable variations in the amount of rainfall would be experienced over places in the country. The JAS rainfall is expected to vary from 670mm to 820mm in the North Bank, Lower River and Central River Regions, whilst in parts of the Upper River and Western Regions (including Kanifing Municipal Council and Banjul), this will increase to around 900mm (fig. 1).

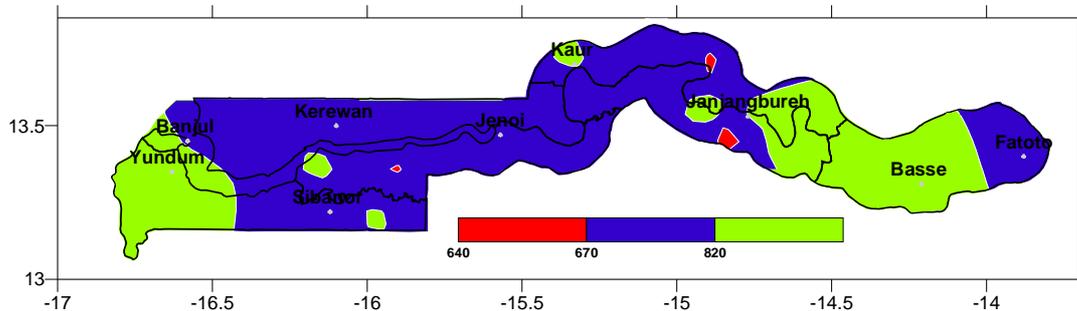


Figure 1: JAS 2010 forecast rainfall

· Number of rainy days

The number of rainy days would generally be **above normal** and expected to vary between 48 and 66 days.

2. PROGRESS OF 2010 RAINY SEASON

The mean surface position of the demarcating boundary between the dry and moist region over West Africa (Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone- ITD) was located over Diourbel (Senegal), Kayes (Mali) and Goure (Niger). Thus, the ITD continued with its northward movement.

Convective clouds development, rain and thunderstorms (sometimes squally) characterized the weather to the south of the ITD, particularly over the Gulf of Guinea States and southern Sahel including The Gambia.

However, to the north, warm, dry and sunny afternoons characterized the weather with occasional dusty/hazy conditions notably over northern Mauritania, Mali and Niger.

3. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR JUNE 11 - 20, 2010

Warm and variably cloudiness will prevail with the likelihood of slight rain and/or thunderstorm over some places.

4. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, significant rainfall was recorded on the 6th and 7th days of the dekad leading to end-of-dekad totals ranging from 8.4mm at Yundum in the Western Third to 89.1mm at Jenoi in the Middle Third of the country (details in fig. 2). The pattern of distribution within the country reveals that most network stations in the Middle (Jenoi, Sapu and Janjangbureh) and Eastern (Bansang, Giroba and Fatoto) Thirds recorded rainfall of more than 20mm.

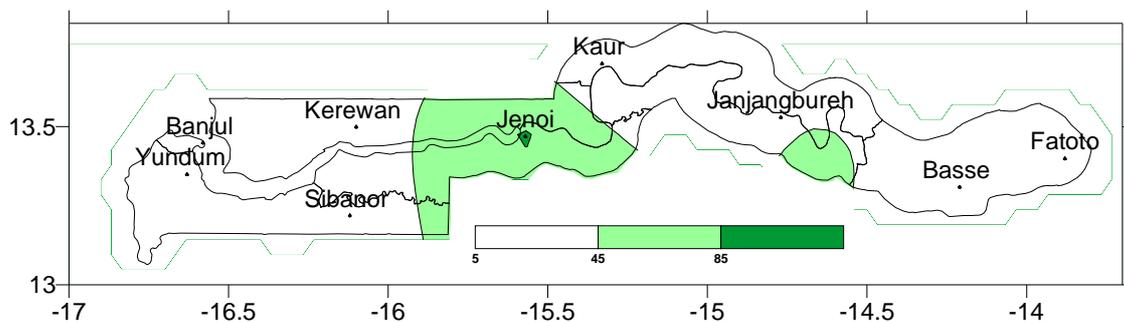


Figure 2: Rainfall intensity during May 21 - 31, 2010

The seasonal total rainfall amount in the country (May 1 to June 10) also ranged from 8.4mm at Yundum to 89.1mm at Jenoi.

When compared to the same period last year, all network stations except Fatoto recorded a surplus, indicating earlier arrival of rains this year than the preceding (2009) season.

5. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Like the previous dekads, temperatures during this dekad remained high, particularly in the Middle and Eastern Thirds of the country. Mean temperatures rose by 0.6°C in the Western Third whilst in the Central and Eastern Thirds they rose by over 1.0°C as compared to the preceding dekad. Thus maximum temperatures ranged from 32.0°C at Banjul to 41.5°C at Fatato whilst minimum temperatures varied between 22.0°C at Yundum to 23.0 °C at Kaur.

The relative humidity (RH) is higher in the Western Third and reduced eastwards. The highest value of 91% was recorded at Yundum in the Western Third, whilst the lowest of 74% was recorded at Fatoto in the eastern Third of the country.

Winds during the dekad were generally moderate to light in speed with the passage of a line squall (50km/hr maximum) on June 6.

6. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Following the rains received during this dekad, some farmers in the North Bank, Central River and Upper River Regions have started sowing of food crops (cereals).

In the Western Third, women are still engaged in vegetable gardening in the low lands.

7. SITUATION OF MARKETS

Cereal Prices

Average prices of cereals have remained un-changed as compared to the preceding dekad, whilst when compared to the prices during the same period last year, these commodities registered a significant decrease ranging from 6 to 30%.

However, the average price of groundnut (D17.90/Kg), stands higher than all the cereals apart from *Findi*. This could be attributed to the households' general dependence on the crop for their daily culinary requirement. The price of beans also remained high at D24.00/Kg.

Horticultural commodity prices

The prices of horticultural commodities continued to fluctuate according to the demand and supply in the various markets. Average prices of exotic onion remain fairly stable throughout the country. Average prices of okra, chili and large pepper are the highest among the other horticultural commodities and remained at D35.14, D44.10 and D56.47 per kilo respectively.

Price of beef

The price of meat & bone and steak remained at D75.00 and D100.00 respectively in the urban markets whilst in the rural weekly markets the price is as low as D60.00 and D80.00 for meat & bone and steak respectively.

Composition of MWG:

Department of Water Resources
Planning Services - Department of Agriculture (DOA)
Communication, Extension & Education Services - DOA
Animal Health & Production Services - DOA
Plant Protection Services - DOA
National Environment Agency

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