

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2011/09

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: July 21 - 31, 2011



Government of The Gambia

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. PROGRESS OF THE RAINY SEASON

The Azores high pressure cell remained quasi-stationary over the North Atlantic Ocean and had core values varying between 1026 – 1032hpa. Its counterpart the St. Helena high recorded core values of 1004 - 1006 hpa respectively.

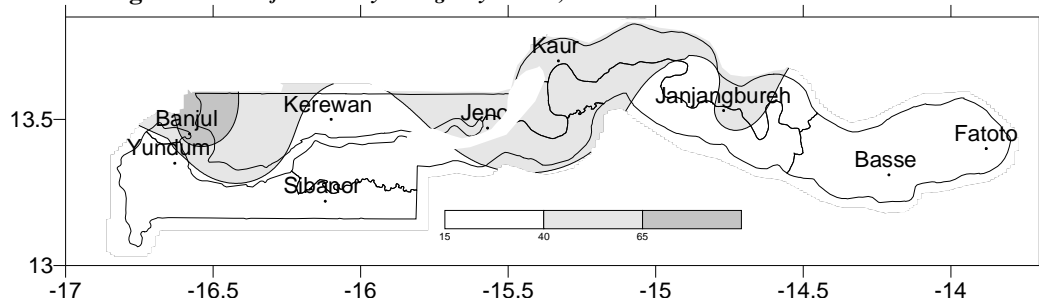
The surface position of Inter-Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) was centered mainly over Northern Senegal, extending North East wards on to the Northern borders of Mauritania and Mali, then sloping gently southeast wards towards Southern Algeria and towards Central Chad. Variable northerly component winds prevailed to the north of the ITD, whereas south and southwesterly winds dominated the flow to the south.

Isolated to scattered convective cloud development were evident over parts of the Sahel and Gulf of Guinea countries that gave way to rain-showers and thunderstorms.

2. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, the rainfall intensities were higher as compared to the previous dekad especially in the Western and Middle Third of the country. But on the other hand, the previous dekad saw a better distribution in space and time. Daily intensities ranged from 1.4mm to 68.2mm in the Western Third, 3.0mm to 37.8mm in the Middle Third and from 0.7mm to 12.8mm in the Eastern Third of the country. The number of rainy days varied between 1 – 3 and occurred mostly in the Middle of the dekad. The dekadal totals ranged from 23.8mm to 84.5mm in the Western Third, 27.2mm to 63.5mm in the Middle Third and from 23.2mm to 34.0mm in the Eastern Third of the country.

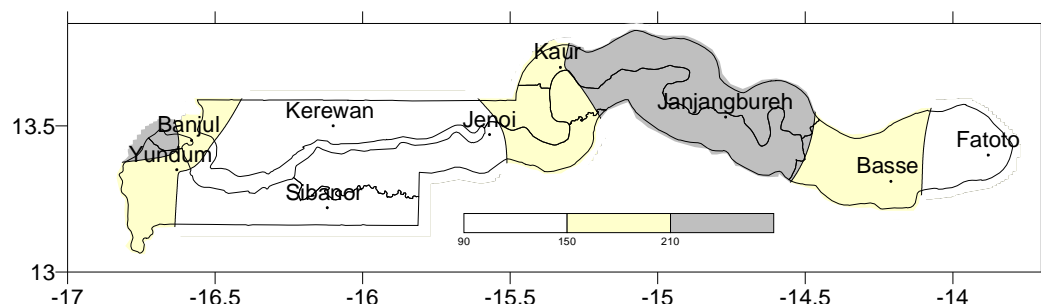
Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during July 21 – 31, 2011



As at July 31, the seasonal total rainfall ranged from 96.9mm at Kerewan in the Western Third to 252.6mm at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third of the country. The number of rainy days ranged from 7 at Jeno in the Middle Third to 18 at Basse in

the Eastern Third. Compared to the past year (2010) and the long term normal deficits were recorded ranging from 5mm at Serekunda in the Western Third to 466mm at Jenoi in the Middle Third, and from 41.6mm at Janjanbureh to 373.8mm at Jenoi, both in the Middle Third, respectively.

Figure 1b: Seasonal total from May 1 to July 31, 2011



3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Generally mean temperatures during this dekad were low as compared to the previous dekad. Maximum temperatures ranged from 31.2 °C at Yundum in the Western Third to 34.4 °C at Basse in the Eastern Third, while minimum temperatures ranged from 19.7 °C at Kerewan in the Western Third to 24.3 °C at Kaur in the Middle Third of the country.

Maximum relative humidity continued to be above 90% throughout the country except at Banjul which recorded 86%.

Winds were generally moderate to light in speed with a line squall that hit the country with a maximum speed of 60.8km/hr on the 26th July 2011

4. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Farmers are mainly engaged in weeding both cereal and groundnut fields in parts of the country. However, in the Western Third (West Coast and Lower River Regions) farmers are still sowing cereal and groundnut seeds.

Phenological development of crops varied in different areas across the country. In the Middle and Eastern Thirds (Central and Upper River Regions) maize, millet and sorghum have reached phenological stages ranging from seedling to tillering. Groundnuts are on flowering or ramification in some parts of the Middle and Eastern Thirds.

In the Western Third, however, due to late onset of rains and the subsequent dry spells, crop development stages ranged from seedling to advanced leaf formation.

Ploughing and sowing in the up-land rice fields are ongoing in parts of the Western Third. In the Middle and Eastern Thirds, crops have reached tillering stage. In the low-land rice fields, transplanting is yet to begin. Vegetable gardening is continuing in some places in the Western Third. Meanwhile sowing of nursery is underway.

5. SITUATION OF MARKETS

Cereals are available in all the retail and weekly markets visited during the period under review. A large quantity of imported rice is evident in both retail and weekly markets all over the country.

Average cereal prices continued to fluctuate depending on the volume of the commodities supplied and demand at the markets. At the weekly markets, average prices of coarse grains (maize, sorghum and millet) varied from D8.66 / kg to D12.00 / kg. Whilst at the retail markets, the prices of these crops varied from D11.92 / kg to D18.60 / kg (table 1).

	Retail Markets			Weekly Markets	
	Serekunda	Latrikunda	Banjul	Brikamaba	Wassu
Maize	17.89	18.6	17.89	10	12
Millet	14.9	18.6	11.92	9.33	12
Sorghum	14.9	18.6	17.89	8.66	12
Local Rice	20	20	N/A	15.55	14
Broken Rice	16	18	18	16.5	14
Long Grain Rice	20	20	20	16.5	14
Findo	37.5	67.5	70	N/A	N/A

Table 1: Evolution of cereal prices (Source: Planning Services - DOA)

The price of beef (meat & bone) is D80.00/Kg in Banjul, Latrikunda and Wassu (table 2). Whilst at Serekunda and Brikamaba, the price of this product remained at D75.00/Kg and D50.00/kg respectively.

At the retail market the price of beef stake varied from D100.00/Kg to D120.00/Kg whilst at the weekly markets the price of stake is D85.00/kg.

Table 2: Evolution of meat prices (Source: Planning Services - DOA)

	Retail Markets			Weekly Markets	
	Serekunda	Latrikunda	Banjul	Brikamaba	Wassu
Beef Meat & Bones	75.00	80.00	80.00	50.00	80.00
Beef Steak	100.00	100.00	120.00	85.00	N/A

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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