

# EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2011/15

## IN THE GAMBIA

Period: September 21 - 30, 2011



Government of The Gambia

Produced and Published by the Multidisciplinary Working Group of the AGRHYMET Regional Programme

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

### 1. PROGRESS OF THE RAINY SEASON

The average surface position of the Inter-Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) embarked on its southward motion with its western axis going through southern Mauritania into northern Senegal, whilst its eastern axis sloped towards southern Niger.

Places south of the ITD were characterized by convective cloud developments resulting in rain showers and severe thunderstorms, occasionally accompanied by strong winds. These occurrences were mostly experienced during the evenings and wee hours over the country.

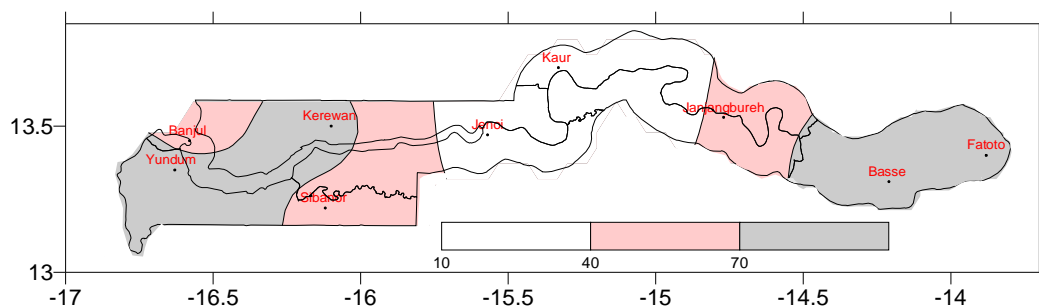
The Sub-Tropical High Pressure System over north Africa, especially the Azores High Pressure zone intensified during the first half of the dekad and remained quasi-stationary over the North Atlantic Ocean with an average core value of 1030hPa. However, the St. Helena High Pressure centre over South Atlantic Ocean regained intensity at the end of the dekad thereby strengthened the monsoon wind flow causing the wet condition over most of West Africa.

### 2. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR OCTOBER 01 – 10, 2011

Rain and thunderstorms are expected during the first three days of the period with a steady shift to dry spell during the rest of the dekad

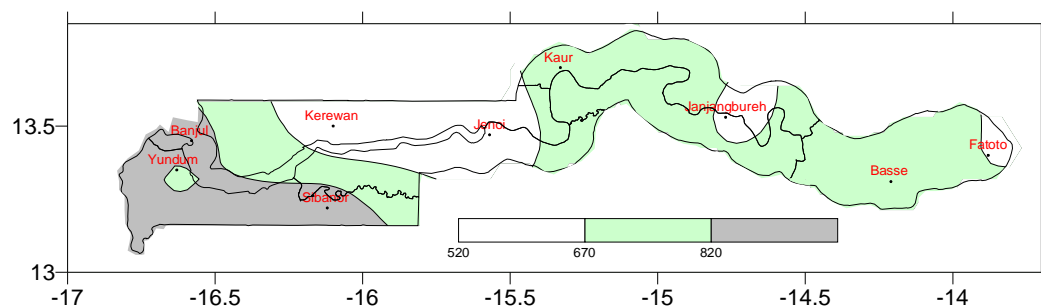
### 3. RAINFALL SITUATION

Rainfall this dekad has dropped significantly in terms of distribution and intensities across the country as compared to the previous dekad. Intensities ranged from 0.5mm to 54.7mm, 1.1mm to 27.3mm and 2.5mm to 49.6mm in the Western, Middle and Eastern Thirds of the country respectively. The dekadal total during the period under review ranged from 10.3mm to 86.7mm and from 69.2mm to 134.0mm during the previous dekad. The number of rainy days decreased from a maximum of 8 days during the previous dekad to 6 days during the current one. (fig. 1a).



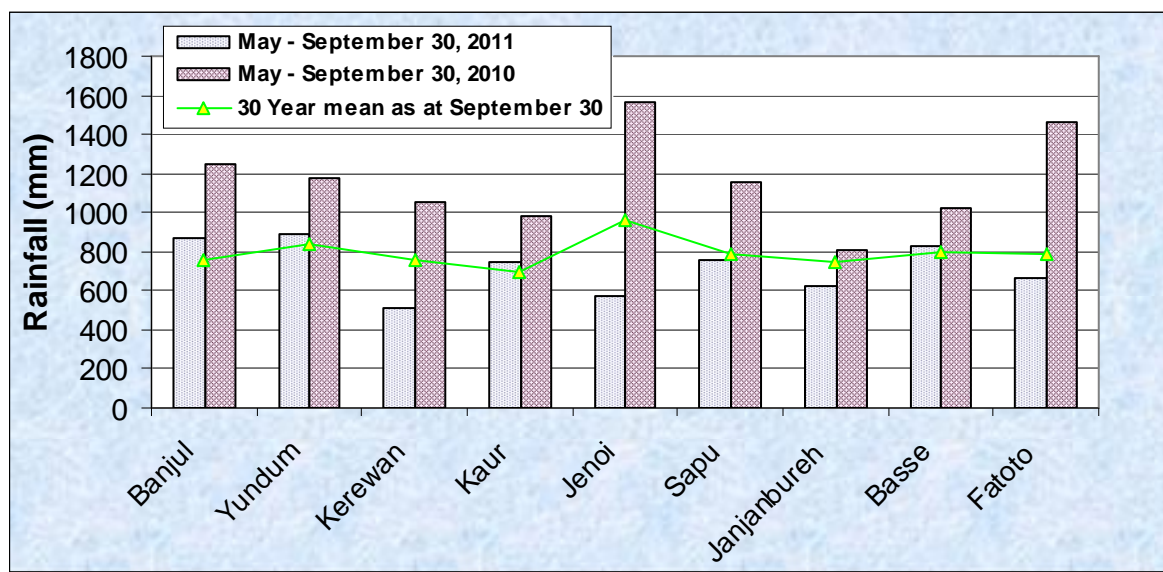
**Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during September 21 – 30, 2011**

The seasonal rainfall total as at end of this dekad ranged from 513.5mm at Kerewan to 939.1mm at Sibanon, all in the Western Third of the country (Fig 1b). Deficits were recorded across the country ranging from 985mm at Jenoi to 185mm at Janjanbureh both in the Middle Third of the country and from 380.4mm at Jenoi to 38.2mm at Yundum in the Western Third of the country as compared to the same period last year and long term mean respectively. However, surpluses of 26.3mm, 47.6mm and 111.2mm were recorded at Basse, Kaur and Banjul in the Eastern, Middle and Western Thirds of the country respectively.



**Figure 1b: Seasonal total from May 1 to September 30, 2011**

Generally, total rainfall amount from May 1 to September 30 continue to remain below that of last year and the long term mean (fig 1c)



**Figure 1c: Rainfall comparison as at September 30, 2011**

#### 4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Temperatures were higher this dekad as compared to last dekad. The lowest temperature was recorded at Kerewan in the Western Third of the country, whilst the highest temperature was recorded at Basse in the Eastern Third of the country. This can be attributed to the low rainfall received during this dekad.

Relatively Humidity is above 90% throughout the country.

Winds were generally light to moderate in speed with a maximum gust of 81.4km/h recorded on the 29<sup>th</sup> at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third of the country.

## 5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

### Crop situation

Harvesting of maize and early millet is ongoing in most parts of the country, whilst the phenological phase of groundnuts ranged from pod formation to maturity, and harvesting. However, due to the dry spell experienced in the North Bank Region, the upland rice and late millet are beginning to suffer.

### Pest Situation

Blister beetles were the most common pest observed during the flowering period of many crops (ie. Maize, Early millet, Sorghum and Rice). However, spraying of this pest was carried-out in the affected fields in the Central River Region.

#### 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  
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