

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

Nº. 2012/05

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: June 11 - 20, 2012



Government of The Gambia

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. PROGRESS OF THE RAINY SEASON

The two high pressure systems, the Azores positioned in the North Atlantic Ocean and the St. Helena, positioned in the South Atlantic Ocean have mean core values of 1020hpa and 1030hpa respectively during much of the period. Thus this pressure configuration allowed the inflow of moist winds from the South Atlantic Ocean into the continent resulting to the precipitations observed in the sub-region.

The northern limit of the rain bearing winds (ITD) on the surface slopes over northern Senegambia, Mali and rising again into northern Niger. South of this position was characterized by convective cloud development, giving rise to thunderstorms with rain over Gulf of Guinea states and in the eastern Sahel countries on a daily basis. However, in the Western Sahel, in particular the Senegambia region was affected only on the 19th of this month which was limited to the eastern parts of both countries. The occurrences of these storms were mostly scattered and confined to the evenings and nights.

In the north of the ITD, by contrast, was rather stable with dust /rising sand observed over Mauritania, where the lowest visibility values of 1000 meters were reported.

2. RAINFALL SITUATION FOR THE DEKAD JUNE 11 –20, 2012

During this dekad, only a single rainy day was recorded (19 June) covering half of the Middle Third and almost the entire Eastern Third except the most eastern part (Fatoto). In the rest of the country, no significant rainfall was recorded. Recorded rainfall amounts ranged from 8.0mm at Kaur to 64.2mm at Sapu, both in the Middle third of the country (fig. 1a).

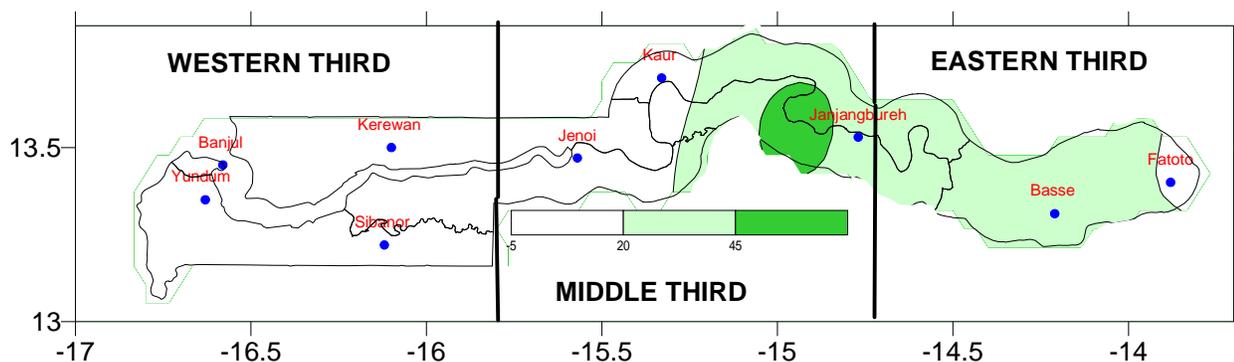


Figure 1a: *Rainfall intensity during June 11 – 20, 2012*

Compared to the previous one, this dekad has shown a change in the rainfall distribution pattern, with the Middle and Eastern thirds of the country dominating.

The seasonal totals ranged from 10.1mm to 69.2mm in the Western Third, 10.6mm to 115.7mm in the Middle Third and from 50.3mm to 52.9mm in the Eastern Third of the country. This shows that so far this year, the Middle Third has received more rainfall than the rest of the country. (fig.1b).

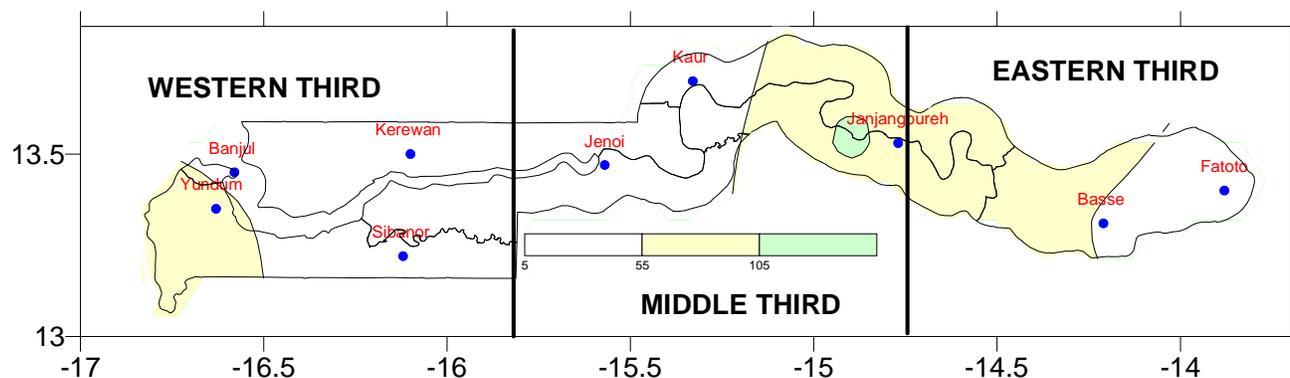


Figure 1: Cumulative rainfall from May 1 – June 20, 2012

In comparison with the long term mean (1981 – 2010), deficits ranging from 14.1mm to 40.8mm were observed across the country, on the other hand, surplus amounts ranging from 15.0mm to 58.5mm were also recorded. Compared to last year (2011), no deficits were observed in the Western and Eastern Thirds of the country, however, deficits ranging from 2.0mm to 11.1mm were observed in the Middle Third.

3. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR JUNE 21 - 30, 2012

The atmosphere will be generally cloudy and humid with chances of thunderstorms and rain especially during the middle of the dekad. Amounts and distribution will vary, with most of the rain expected over the central and eastern parts of the country.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

During this dekad, extreme temperatures recorded were 40.7°C and 41.0°C in the Middle and Eastern Thirds respectively, whilst the lowest temperature recorded was 17.0°C, also in the Eastern Third of the country.

Average sunshine duration varied between 3.6 hrs at Kerewan in the Western Third to 8.4 hrs in Basse in the Eastern Third.

Winds were generally light to moderate in speed with a line squall of 59.7 km/ph recorded at Janjangbureh in the Middle Third of the country on the 19th June.

Relatively Humidity remained above 60% throughout the period.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Throughout the country on-farm activities were very low, most of it limited to farm clearing, seeds acquisition and preparations. Meanwhile, pockets of field activities such as sowing of early millet and tillering are been carried out in some parts of the Middle Third (around Brikamaba areas, CRR south) and Eastern Third (around Basse areas, URR). In the rest of the country, farmers are waiting anxiously for adequate rains to begin humid agricultural operations.

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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