

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

Nº. 2012/08

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: July 11 - 20, 2012



Government of The Gambia

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. 2012 July-August-September (JAS) Seasonal Forecast Update

Given the current state and trends of SSTs over the global tropical oceans, the JAS 2012 rainfall outlook over The Gambia remains to be Normal with tendency to below Normal (figure 1).

The country is not expected to experience severe deficit of rainfall according to Climatological prediction for the Western Sahel region including The Gambia.

The latest figures indicate a 25% chance of above normal rainfall, 45% chance of normal rainfall and 30% chance for below normal rainfall.

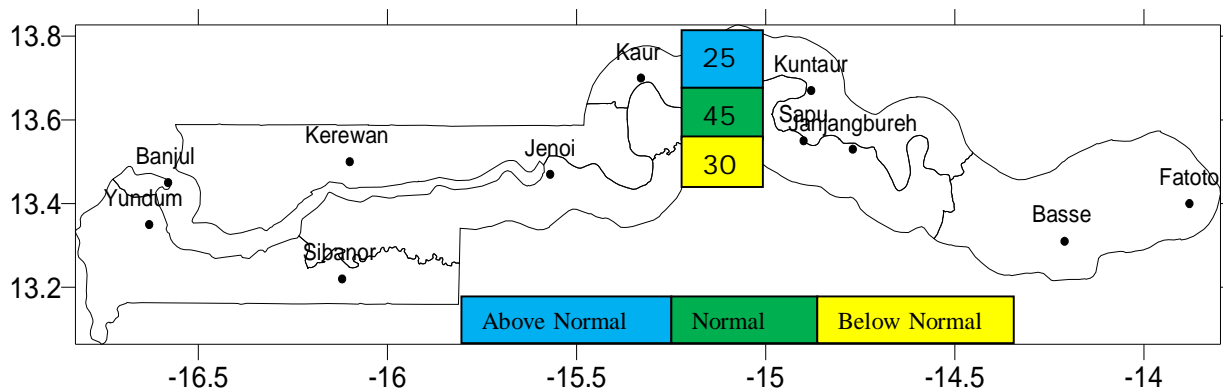
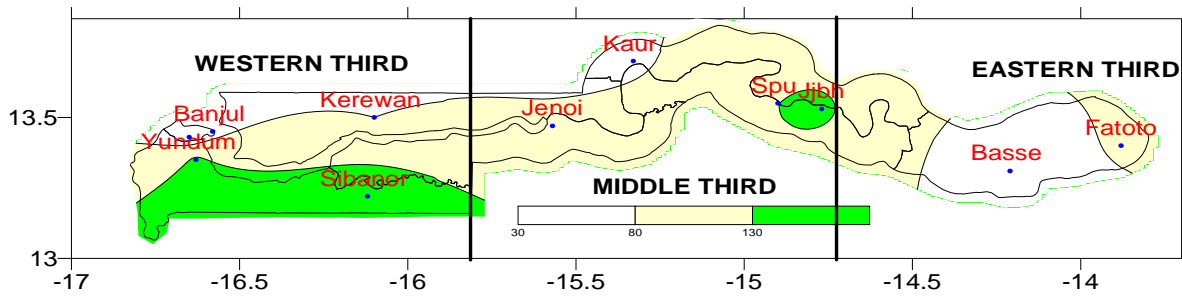


Figure 1: JAS 2012 Forecast For the Gambia

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

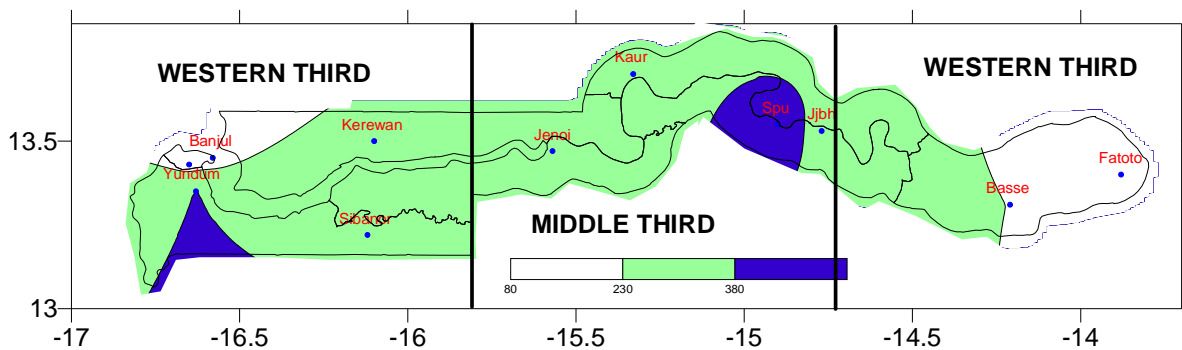
Compared to the previous dekad, this dekad, has witnessed an increase in rainfall amounts both in intensity and frequency across the country. Number of rainy days varied between 4 and 8 days, thus an increase of 1 to 2 days over the previous dekad resulting to an improved rainfall distribution in time and in space. Highest daily down pours were 74.1mm at Yundum in the Western. Third, 90.0 mm and 86.9 mm at Sapu and Janjanbureh respectively both in the Middle Third and 36.0mm at Fatoto in the Eastern Third of the country. Dekadal totals ranged from 49.6 mm to 164.3 mm in the Western Third, 72.2 mm to 136.3 mm in the Middle Third and 37.1 mm to 87.9 mm in the Eastern Third (fig. 1a).



Spu: Sapu, Jjbh: Janjanbureh

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

As at July 20, the seasonal totals ranged from 177.6mm to 346.2mm in the Western Third, 251.4mm to 462.2mm in the Middle Third and 227.9mm in the Eastern Third of the country (fig.1b).



Spu: Sapu, Jjbh: Janjanbureh

Figure 1b: Cumulative rainfall from May 1 – July 20, 2012

Compared to the same period last year (2011), no deficits were recorded across the country except at Serekunda (21.0mm) in the Western Third.

The country average stood at 287.3mm, 49% above last year's average (140.1mm) and 45% above the long term (1981 – 2010) mean (197.6mm). Despite the late on-set of rains in the country, the rainfall situation as at July 20 is better than that of last year and long term mean during the same period.

Extreme events denoted as rainfall amounts greater than 40mm that may cause floods or severe top soil erosions in the areas affected as shown in (fig.1C).

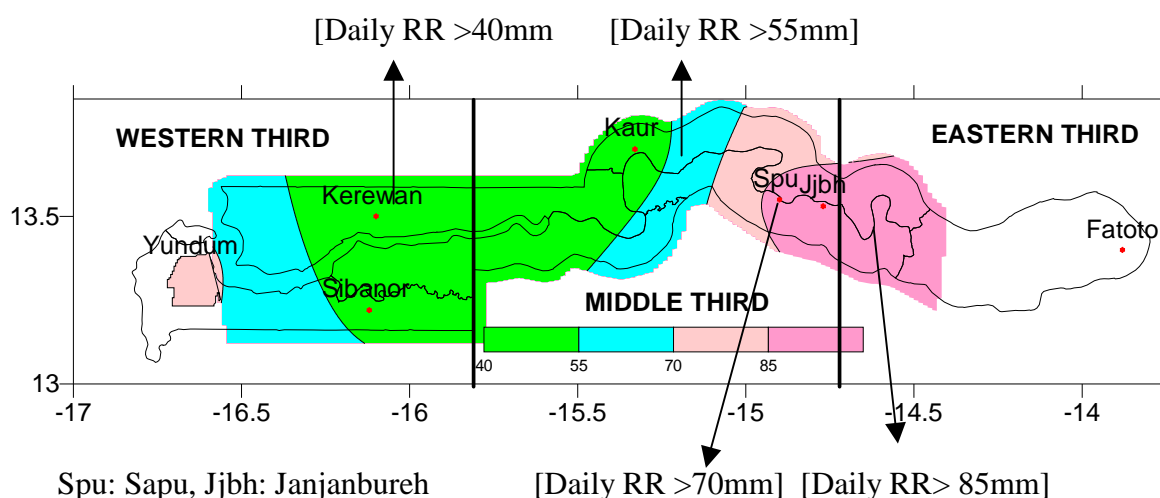


Figure 1C: Extreme events

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

During this dekad, the thermal situation remained largely unchanged compared to the previous dekad due to increased cloud cover. Average temperatures remained between 27 and 28 °C, whilst maximum temperatures also remained between 34 and 35°C across the country. Average sunshine duration dropped from a maximum of 8.2hrs during the previous dekad to 7.9hrs in the present one. Winds were generally light to moderate in speed.

Maximum Relative Humidity was generally above 90% throughout the period and the minimum relative humidity also remained above 60%. Average daily potential evapotranspiration (PET) varied between 2.9 to 3.3mm across the country, thus favouring prolonged soil moisture content facilitating crop growth and on-farm operations.

4. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Across the country, the agricultural situation looked good. Sowing of field crops is largely completed with weeding dominating farm activities. The earlier grown maize, sorghum, early millet, upland and lowland rice are continuing their development in earnest. No outbreak of pest has been reported throughout the country; however weeds are becoming a major problem with farmers in certain areas.

Composition of MWG:

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 Planning Services - Department of Agriculture (DOA)
 Communication, Extension & Education Services - DOA
 Animal Health & Production Services - DOA
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