

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

N° 2012/13

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: September 01 - 10, 2012



Government of The Gambia

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. PROGRESS OF THE RAINY SEASON

The Inter-Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) remained predominately above 20 degrees latitude representing a slight northward shift as compared to the previous dekad.

Weather to the south was characterized by convective cloud development, occasionally thunderstorms and wide spread heavy down pours of rain.

2. RAINFALL SITUATION

This first dekad of September saw another significant improvement as compared to the previous decades. Highest daily rainfall recorded were 226.9 mm in the Western Third, 126.9 mm in the Middle Third and 40.9 mm in the Eastern Third of the country. Number of rainy days ranged from 5 to 8 days resulting to significant end-of-dekad totals to range from 69.1 mm at Fatoto in the Eastern Third to 575.1mm at Serekunda in the Western Third of the country (fig. 1a).

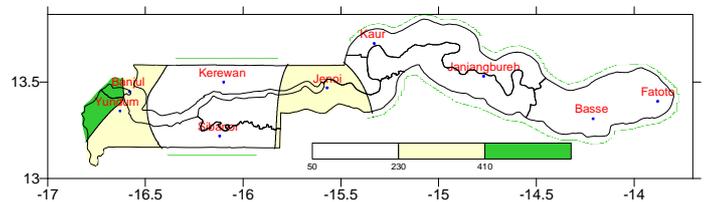


Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during September 1 – 10, 2012

These heavy downpours recorded during this dekad have significantly augmented the seasonal totals as at 1st September 2012 thus ranging from 553.5mm at Giroba Kunda in the Eastern Third to 1,239.9mm at Sapu in the Middle Third of the country (fig.1b).

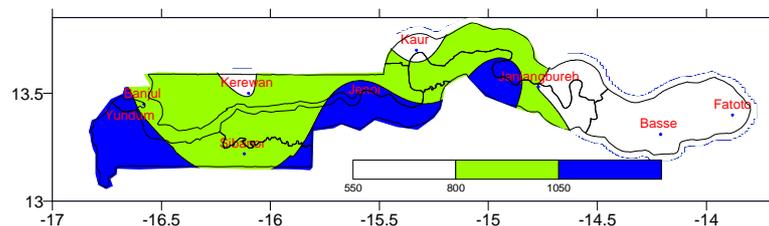


Figure 1b: Cumulative rainfall from May 1 – September 10, 2012

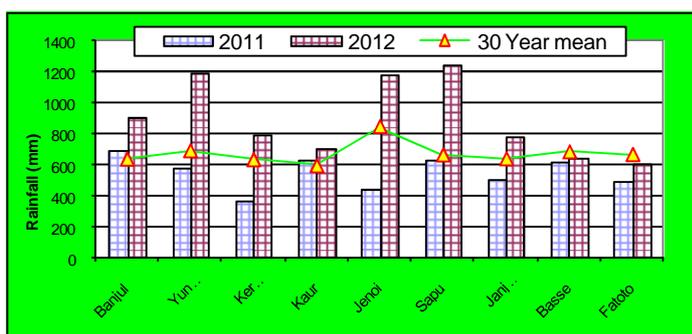


Figure 1c: Comparison of 2012 rainfall, against 2011 and the long-term mean

The seasonal totals as at September 1, 2012 in comparison with the same period last year (2011), show surpluses in all stations across the country. However, deficits of 42.9 mm and 67.3 mm were recorded at Basse and Fatoto respectively as compared to the long term mean (figure 1c).

This has shown that as at this period under review, rainfall recorded this year is far more than the same period last year, but with a small margin in the Eastern Third of the country.

3. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR SEPTEMBER 11 – 20, 2012

Continuous rainfall will relax, though scattered rain shower and thunderstorm are expected with occasionally strong winds during the dekad.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

During this dekad, temperatures remained almost the same as in the previous dekad. The highest temperature recorded was 32.3 °C at Sapu whilst the lowest temperature recorded was 22.6 °C at Jenoi, both in the Middle Third of the country.

Highest sunshine recorded during this dekad was 6.1 hours at Kaur in the Middle third, whilst lowest sunshine recorded was 4.3 hours at Yundum in the Western Third. The highest evaporation recorded was 4.8 mm at Jenoi and Janjangbureh both in the Middle Third, whilst the lowest evaporation recorded was 3.8 mm at Fatoto in the Eastern Third of the country.

Relatively Humidity still remained above 90% throughout the period whilst the minimum Relatively Humidity also remained above 65% in the country.

Winds were generally light to moderate in speed.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Overall crop performance across the country is impressive in terms of growth and development. However, the continuous heavy rainfall experienced nation-wide during the third dekad of August into the first dekad of September led to crop performance being impeded especially for low-land rice and millet in certain localities.

Coarse grains

Generally, maize is at flowering and in some places the crop has reached full maturity and harvesting is in progress. The product is found in almost all markets. The early millet crop is at an advance stage of heading/flowering and grain formation in the Western (North Bank and Lower River Regions) and Middle (Central River Region) Thirds of the country. *The performance of early millet in these areas is expected to be low due to continues rains and cloud cover during the day, as enough sunlight is essential for crop growth especially during flowering and grain formation stages.* Meanwhile, late millet is at tillering and shooting

stages in the Eastern Third and also in parts of the Western Third (West Coast Region). Sorghum fields are at advanced jointing stage with few fields at booting.

Rice

Upland rice across the country is growing as expected and most of the crop is at the tillering or stem elongation phase. Early planted 'Narica' rice fields are at booting stages in certain areas.

In low-land rice fields, transplanting of rice nurseries has been affected by heavy rains. Most of the transplanted fields in the Western (NBR, WCR and LRR) and Middle (CRR north and south) Thirds have been submerged. According to Mr. Babanding Touray, Village Development Committee Chair person at Kerewan Samba Sirreh, over one thousand plots of rice at Jahalli Pacharr fields are abandoned due to plenty waters. Farmers are waiting for the reduction of rain water in the fields to continue transplanting, with the fear that the nurseries may overgrow. Photos I & II below show some flooded fields in Sapu and Kuntaur respectively.



Photo 1: Man standing in his flooded rice field in Sapu



Photo 2: Woman transplanting in a flooded field

Groundnuts

Groundnuts across the country are progressing well, with development stages ranging from ramification to Maturity. For early sown fields of Philippine pink, the crop is at maturity stage in some places, whilst in other places it is at advanced stage of pegging. The other groundnut varieties, Senegal 206 and 73-33 are at ramification and flowering/pegging stages.

6. PEST SITUATION

Foot root disease affecting un-housed animals is reported in some parts of the country. The presence of blister beetles was also reported in certain areas, but no damages to crops have been reported.

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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