NATIONAL METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES AGENCY
TEN DAY AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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SUMMARY

During the third dekad of November 2004, with the exception of most parts of Tigray, north tip of Afar, few areas of northeastern Amhara, pocket areas of western Oromiya and western margin of Benishangul-Gumuz the rest to the country received normal to above normal rainfall. This situation adversely affected the on going harvest and post harvest activities over much of Meher growing areas. However, the observed better rainfall condition over pastoral and agro pastoral areas of the country had indispensable contribution to the enhancement of pasture and drinking water. . Regarding heavy falls Bati, Aira, Awassa, Sirinka, Majete, Alge, Chira, Dolo Mena, Cheffa, Gonder, Kibre Mengist and Combolcha recorded 124, 73.2, 67.1, 61.6, 53.5, 50.2, 44.8, 42.7, 41.8, 40.3, 39.4 and 38.9 mm of heavy falls, respectively. As the result, Dolo Mena, Kibre Mengist, Bedelle, Majete, Woliso, Aira, Alge, Chagni, Nejo, Jinka and Chira reported moderate to heavy damage on crops that were being at ripeness stage. Regarding air temperature, some northern and central highlands of the country reported the occurrence of frost due to the persisted fall in minimum air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days.

During the first dekad of December, with the exception of eastern Oromiya, parts of southern Oromiya and pocket areas of central and western Oromiya, parts of southern Amhara, pocket areas of eastern Benishangul-Gumuz, pocket areas of northern Somali, western half of SNNPR as well as southeastern Gambella the rest portions of the country experienced below normal rainfall. The observed normal to above normal rainfall over western Oromiya, eastern and western Hararge, parts of southern Amhara negatively affected the on going harvest and post harvest activities of long and medium cycle crops over the aforementioned areas. In accordance with the station's report, heavy falls with hailstorms over western and southern Oromiya (Shambu and Dolo Mena), some areas of western Amhara (Chagni) and western SNNPR (Masha) resulted in crops damage on crops, which are ready to harvest. The highlands of western, eastern and central Oromiya, southern and northeastern Amhara as well as southern Tigray exhibited extreme minimum air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days. Thus, this condition could have negative impact on the normal growth and development of horticultural and perennial crops including crops, which are at early maturity stage. With regard to crop phenological report, sorghum was at ripeness stage over western, eastern and central Oromiya as well as southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz. Maize was at wax ripeness stage over southern Oromiya. Millet was at flowering stage over some areas of western Amhara, eastern Benishangul-Gumuz and western Oromiya. Teff was at ripeness stage over central Oromiya, southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz while at flowering stage over southern Oromiya. Wheat was at ripeness stage over central and western Oromiya as well as northeastern Amhara while at flowering stage over some areas of southern Oromiya. Nug was at Dark ripeness stage over some areas of western Oromiya while at yellow ripeness stage over some areas of central Oromiya.

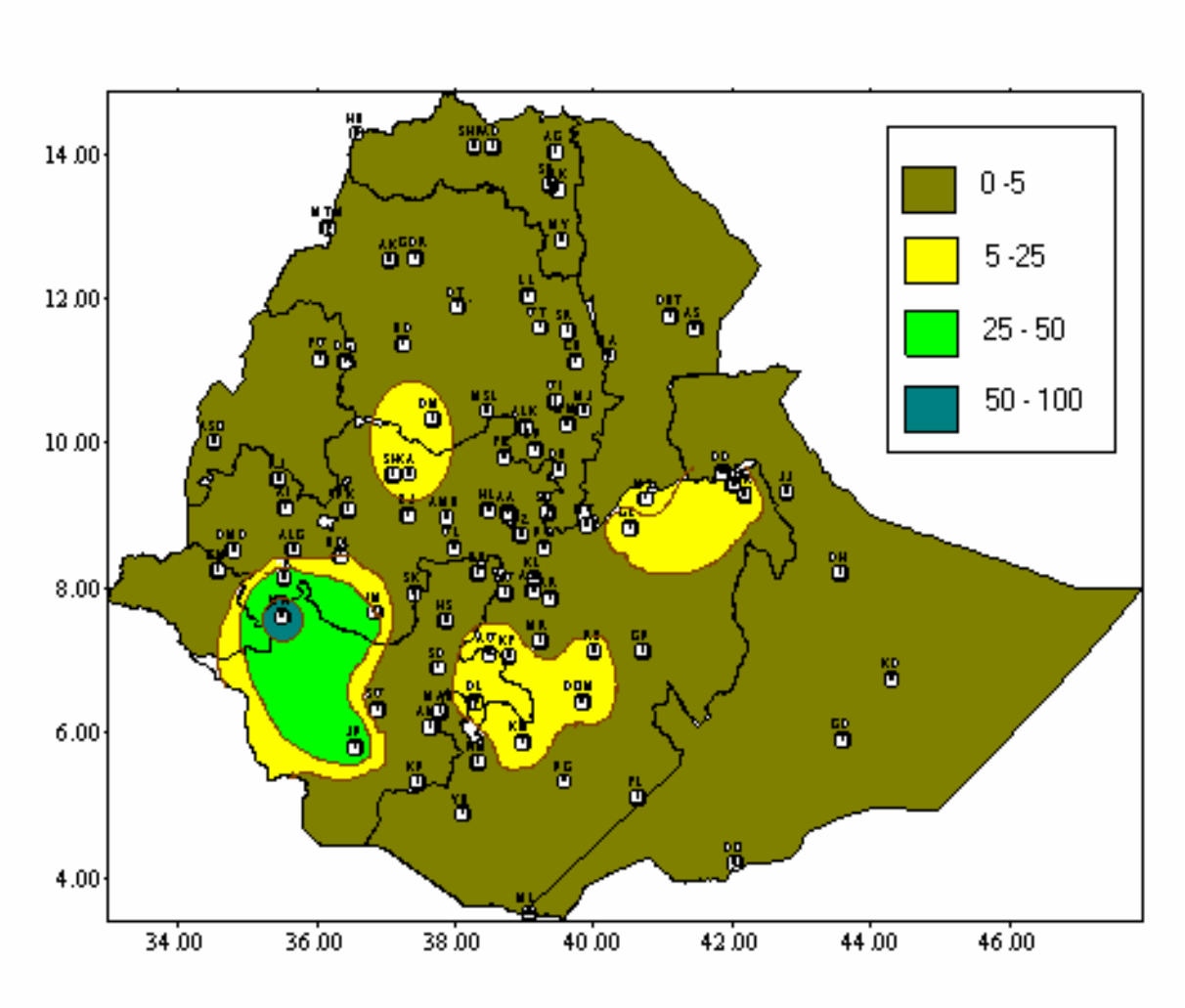

Fig 1. Rainfall distribution in mm (1-10, December 2004)

1. WEATHER ASSESSMENT

1.1 RAINFALL AMOUNT (Fig. 1)

Masha, Gore, Jimma, Jinka, Gelemso, Abomsa, Dollo Mena, Shambu, Chagni and Debre Markos received 66.7, 29.7, 25.6, 24.4, 20.7, 19.6, 16.8, 16.8, 16.5 and 15.6 mm of dekadal rainfall, respectively.

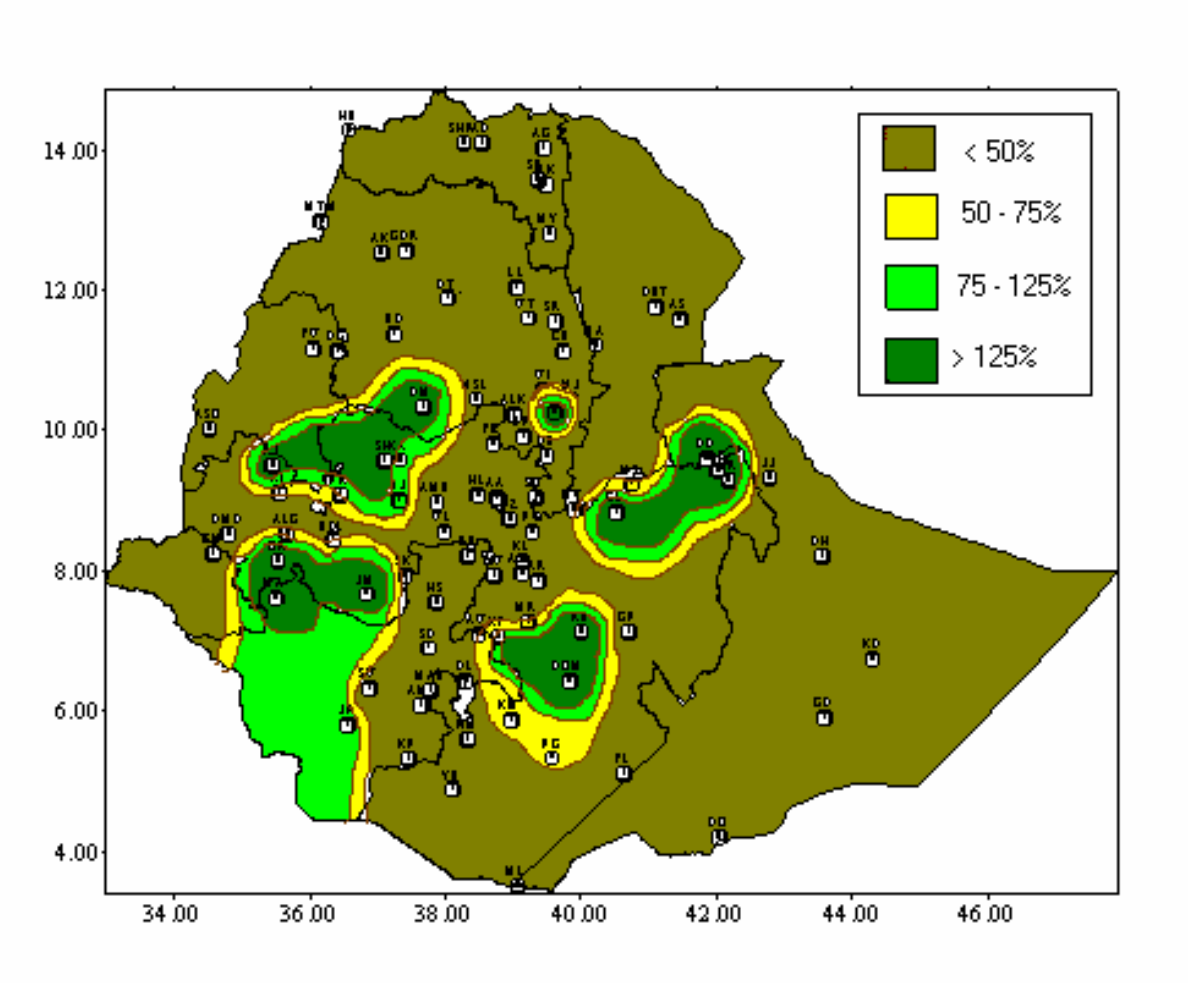

Fig.2 Percent of normal rainfall (1-10, December 2004)

Explanatory notes for the legend:
<50 -- Much below normal
50—75% -- below normal
75—125% --- Normal
> 125% ---- Above normal

1.2 RAINFALL ANOMALY (Fig. 2)

With the exception of eastern Oromiya, parts of southern Oromiya and pocket areas of central and western Oromiya, parts of southern Amhara, pocket areas of eastern Benishangul-Gumuz, pocket areas of northern Somali, western half of SNNPR as well as southeastern Gambela the rest portions of the country experienced below normal rainfall.

1.3 TEMPERATURE ANOMALY

The highlands of western, eastern and central Oromiya, southern and northeastern Amhara as well as southern Tigray exhibited extreme minimum air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days. For instance, Meraro, Debre Birhan, Wegel Tena, Mehal Meda, Alemaya, Bale Robe, Adigrat, Koffele, Jimma, Enewary, Mychew and Kulumsa registered extreme air temperature as low as 0.5, 0.8, 1.2, 1.2, 2.0, 2.5, 2.5, 2.6, 2.9, 3.0, 3.0 and 3.1^0C, respectively.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE SECOND DEKAD OF DECEMBER 2004

An incursion of moisture from northern Indian Ocean towards our country is expected for the coming ten days. Hence, the occurrence of unseasonable rains is high over northeastern and eastern parts of the country. Besides, southwestern portions of the country are expected to get light rains. However, the Bega's dry and sunny weather condition is expected to dominate over the remaining parts of the country. In general, eastern Amhara, eastern and western Oromiya, Gambela, SNNPR and Somali, regions are expected to have unseasonable rains at places. The remaining parts of the country, however, will be under dry weather condition.

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

3.1 VEGETATION CONDITION AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

The observed normal to above normal rainfall over western Oromiya, eastern and western Hararge, parts of southern Amhara negatively affected the on going harvest and post harvest activities of long and medium cycle crops over the aforementioned areas. In accordance with the station's report, heavy falls with hailstorms over western and southern Oromiya (Shambu and Dolo Mena), some areas of western Amhara (Chagni) and western SNNPR (Masha) resulted in crops damage on crops, which are ready to harvest. The highlands of western, eastern and central Oromiya, southern and northeastern Amhara as well as southern Tigray exhibited extreme minimum air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days. Some stations like Meraro, Debre Birhan, Wegel Tena, Mehal Meda, Alemaya, Bale Robe, Adigrat, Koffele, Jimma, Enewary, Mychew and Kulumsa registered extreme minimum air temperature as low as 0.5, 0.8, 1.2, 1.2, 2.0, 2.5, 2.5, 2.6, 2.9, 3.0, 3.0 and 3.1^0C, respectively. With regard to crop phenological report, sorghum was at ripeness stage over western, eastern and central Oromiya as well as southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz. Maize was at wax ripeness stage over southern Oromiya. Millet was at flowering stage over some areas of western Amhara, eastern Benishangul-Gumuz and western Oromiya. Teff was at ripeness stage over central Oromiya, southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz while at flowering stage over southern Oromiya. Wheat was at ripeness stage over central and western Oromiya as well as northeastern Amhara while at flowering stage over some areas of southern Oromiya. Nug was at Dark ripeness stage over some areas of western Oromiya while at yellow ripeness stage over some areas of central Oromiya.

3.2 EXPECTED WEATHER IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE DURING THE COMING DAKAD

Due to the anticipated moisture incursion from northern Indian Ocean towards our country, there will be occasional fall over few areas of northeastern and eastern parts of Ethiopia. Thus, this condition would result in shading of matured grains from crops, which are ready to harvest. Besides, the moist situation would favor the outbreak of post harvest pests on harvested grains, which are not put in proper manner. Therefore, to minimize the damage caused by unseasonable rains farmers should take proper precaution on time and exploit the suitable dry condition to harvest their matured crops and protect their production. Moreover, the harvested grains should collect in the way in which it can allow air circulation to avoid favorable condition for the out break of post harvest pests. In addition to that, the harvested grain should keep proper storage drying level before storage in order to minimize post harvest losses.