
EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2017/06

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: June 21-30, 2017



Government of The Gambia

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Multidisciplinary Working Group

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1.0 METEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

The average surface position of the ITD (*imaginary line separating south-westerly humid & warm winds from north-easterly cold & dry winds*) continued on its northward movement during the dekad with its western axis oscillating over northern Senegal, southern Mauritania, central Mali, central Niger and then slanting onto Chad. This further northward movement of the ITD allowed the inflow of moisture laden winds from the south-east into the sub-region, thus resulting to the rains experienced during the dekad.

Regions in the north of the ITD were characterized by dry and stable atmosphere, with dust haze observed over Algeria, northern sectors of Mauritania and Mali.

Places to the south of the ITD were affected by instability in the atmosphere with convective cloud activities leading to rain showers and thunderstorms mostly over the Gulf of Guinea states and much of Sahel region including the Gambia.

1.1 WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE GAMBIA

Generally warm and humid conditions prevailed with convective activities leading to rain and thunderstorms, occasionally accompanied by strong winds during the period over the entire country.

1.2 OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT DEKAD

The atmosphere will be generally warm and humid with occurrence of convective cloud activities which will enhance precipitation over the country during the period. Moderate to heavy rains and thunderstorms, occasionally associated with strong winds is expected to affect the country from the 01st to 03rd and also from the 08th July 2017 onwards the end of the dekad.

2.0 AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

2.1 RAINFALL SITUATION

Rainfall records during this dekad showed that there is enough soil moisture for planting of crops throughout the country; significant rainfall amounts were recorded in all the stations with Sapu in the Middle Third recording the highest dekadal total of **303.2** mm, Basse and Fatoto in the Eastern Third both recorded dekadal totals of above 100mm, whilst in the Western Third, Kerewan recorded the highest dekadal total of 165.0 mm (**Figure 1a** below).

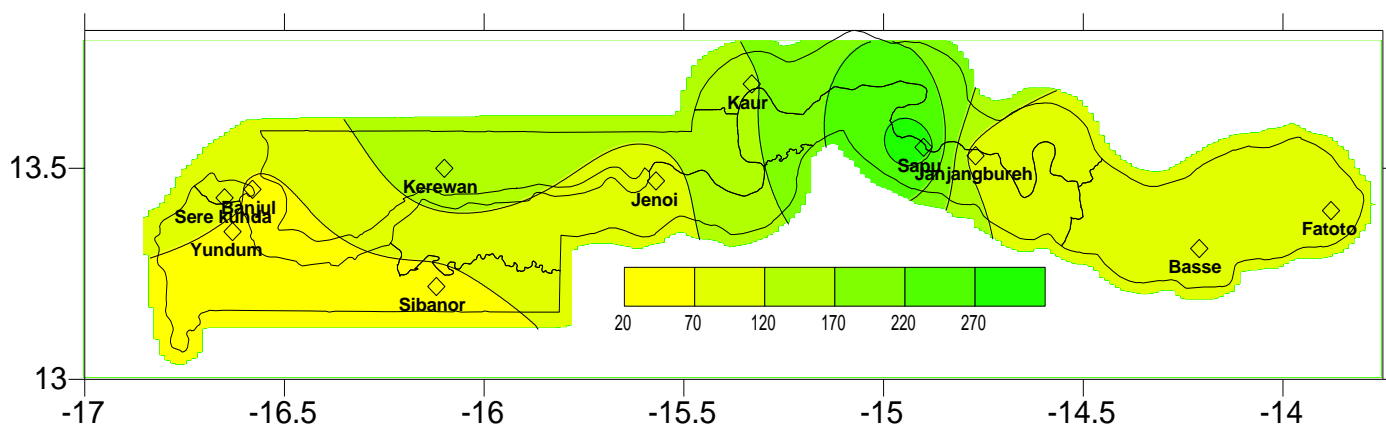


Figure 1a: Dekadal rainfall distribution (June 21st – June 30th 2017)

Seasonal totals recorded so far showed little variation from the dekadal totals, as most of the rainfall was recorded in this dekad. Sapi in the Middle Third recorded seasonal total of 312.7 mm and in the Eastern Third, Basse and Fatoto recorded 139.8 and 140.2 mm respectively, **Figure 1b**.

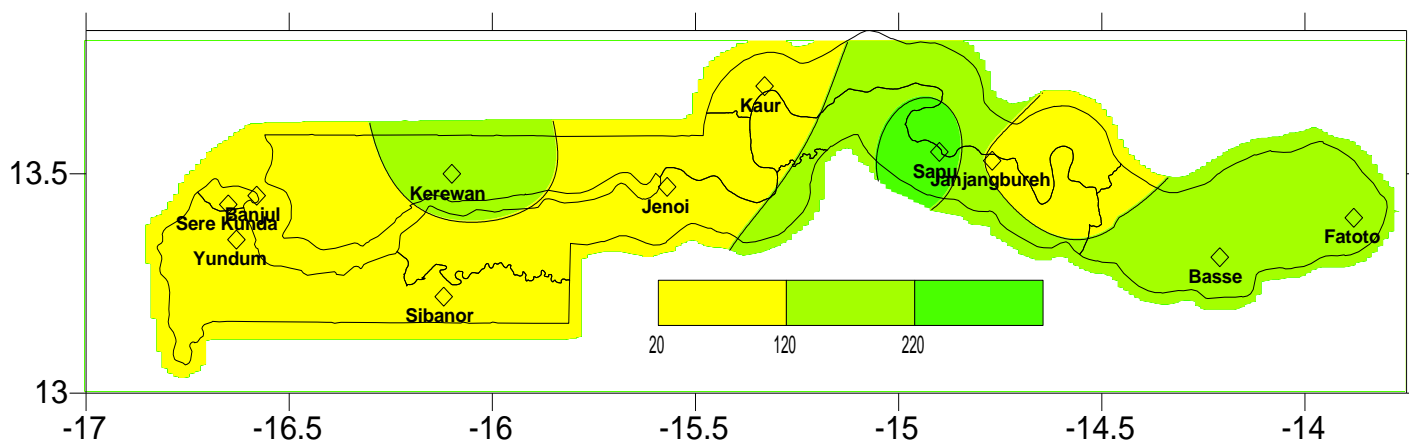


Figure 1b: Seasonal rainfall distribution from May 1st 2017 to June 30th 2017.

2.2 RAINFALL COMPARISM

The Country average as of **30th June 2017**, stood at **112.3mm**, **160% above** the country average for last year (**30th June 2016** at **43.2mm**), and **41% above the long term mean (1981-2010;79.5mm)**. This shows that this year we had earlier rains than last year, as most of the Western Third did not receive rain by the end of June 2016.

2.3 Temperature

Average temperatures were between 29°C in the Western Third and 30°C in the rest of the country. Maximum temperatures varied between 37°C in the Western Third, 39°C and 41°C in the Middle and Eastern Thirds respectively whereas minimum temperatures reached 18°C in the West to 23°C in the Eastern sector.

2.4 Winds

Winds were moderate to strong with maximum speed of 59km/h recorded over Jenoi in the Middle Third of the country leading to some structural damages particularly in that region.

2.5 Sunshine Duration

Due to increase in cloud coverage, average sunshine coverage across the country has reduced similar to the previous dekad. Recorded figures were between 6 to 7 hours of coverage across the country.

2.6 Relative Humidity

The average Relative Humidity (RH) was above 60% countrywide. This situation indicates that there is increased moisture content in the atmosphere.

2.7 Update on the 2017 Rainfall Seasonal Outlook for July August and September (JAS)

Given the current state and trends over the global tropical oceans and their surface temperatures, and persisted warming of the **Tropical North Atlantic Ocean** and the **Pacific** throughout the month of June 2017, is a scenario that favours good precipitation for the Western Sahel including the Gambia. The update maintained that rains are expected to be **Above Normal to Normal (800mm and above)** over the Gambia.

Dry spells of few days countrywide are expected, between which there could be successive rains especially during the day reducing working hours on the farms.

3.0 AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

WEST COAST REGION

In the West Coast region farmers are predominantly engaged in ploughing, clearing and sowing of major crops like groundnut, late millet, maize and findi in the upland fields; whilst in the lowlands, farmers are busy on nursery preparation for rice crops. Harvesting of some vegetables is still in progress.

NORTH BANK REGION

The main agricultural activity in this region is sowing of upland crops like groundnut, early millet and maize. Few farmers are still involved in field clearing

LOWER RIVER REGION

Like in the North Bank Region, farmers in this region are also busy on sowing in their farm lands. With the exception of lowland rice, sowing have started for all other major crops (groundnut, early millet, maize and upland rice)

CENTRAL RIVER REGION NORTH

Most farmers in this region are busy on sowing of crops such as early millet and groundnut in the upland fields. Harvesting of dry season rice production is in progress and expected to finish by the end of July. In the rainy season rice production schemes, nursery preparation is ongoing and farmers will soon embark on transplanting.

CENTRAL RIVER REGION SOUTH

In this region, agricultural activities varies, in the upland fields, farmers are sowing their crops (early millet, maize, groundnut, sorghum and upland rice). In the lowland Tidal areas, harvesting, bird scaring, and nursery preparation for wet season rice production is ongoing, whereas few farmers have started transplanting. In the non

tidal areas (Kudang, Sukuta and Bansang) some farmers are engaged in land preparation and broadcasting of rice seeds. Agricultural officials in this region are also busy on the identification of potential beneficiaries for the distribution of seeds that have been provided by the FAO to farmers in the region.

UPPER RIVER REGION

N/A

4.0 LIVESTOCK

The Livestock situation in the Country is still not impressive as greater part of the grazing fields have been cleared by farmers in preparation for the rainy season. This often results to the indiscriminate burning of bushes that deprived Livestock access to adequate feeds. This exercise is likely to increase the number of clinical cases due to the warm weather which is conducive for some disease vectors. In view of that, clinical treatments figures are likely to rise. The following clinical cases were seen during the Month of June 2017. CRRS 137 heads of cattle, 109 Sheep 202 goats, 43 donkeys and 78 horses. In CRRN 213 heads of cattle 85 sheep 226 goats, 55 donkeys and 12 horses. LRR 194 heads of cattle, 251 Sheep, 227 goats, 21 donkeys and 34 horses. NBR, 248 cattle, 221 Sheep, 115 goats, 64 donkeys and 39 horses. URR 279 heads of cattle, 252 Sheep, 211 goats 57 donkeys and 44 horses. WCR 216 heads of cattle 173 Sheep 231 goats 71 donkeys and 58 horses.

The Department will not be found wanting in its fight against the destructive effects of animal diseases in the Country.

Banjul July 2nd 2017

National MWG of The Gambia

Composition of MWG:

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Communication, Extension & Education Services -
DOA
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