

SUMMARY

During the third dekad of August 2005 most parts of SNNP, parts of central and eastern Oromiya, southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz including parts of western Amhara exhibited below normal rainfall. Nevertheless, the impact was not significant in terms of water stress in most areas. As a result crops were in a good shape in most Meher crop producing areas. Some areas of north-western, western, northern and central Ethiopia exhibited heavy falls ranging from 40-85 mm, which can have damaging effect particularly in low-lying areas and in areas where the soil type is clay. For instance Bedelle experienced heavy falls greater than 30 mm for four days out of the ten days period and reported crop damage due to flooding and hailstorms. Moreover, Gimbi reported maize and sorghum crops damage due to the same reason. Pursuant to the crop phenological report sowing of teff was under way in some areas of southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz like Assosa and eastern Oromiya like Gelemso. Dembi Dolo reported slight wilting on maize and sorghum crops due to moisture stress. Assosa and Gimbi reported medium field condition on nug and sorghum fields, respectively due to slight weed infestation. Besides Gimbi reported slight sorghum crop damage due to disease infestation on the same crop (sorghum).

During the first dekad of September 2005 even though eastern and south Tigray and parts of eastern Amhara including Arsi and Bale zones of Oromiya, the crop condition was in a good shape due to better rainfall observed during the dekad under review (1-10 September 2005). On the other hand some pocket areas of northwestern, western, central and eastern parts of the country received heavy falls ranging from 30-86.5 mm in one rainy day. Moreover some areas like Nekemt and Limu Genet exhibited heavy falls repeatedly for three days during the ten-day period. As a result Limu Genet reported crop damage due to hailstorm. In accordance with the crop phenological report (1-10 September 2005) harvest of Millet was underway in some areas of northeastern Benishangul-Gumuz like Bullen while at flowering and tasseling stage over west Oromiya like Limu Genet and Nedjo including eastern Oromiya like Gelemso. Sowing of teff has been carried out in some areas of eastern Amhara like Sirinka. With regard to the effect of heavy falls and continuous wet condition observed in some pocket areas like Assosa, Limu Genet and Kombolcha resulted in weed infestation; hail damage and water logging during the first dekad of September 2005, respectively. As a result medium field condition has been observed over the areas.

1. WEATHER ASSESSMENT

1.1 RAINFALL AMOUNT (Fig. 1)

Central and parts of western Amhara, few areas of western and central Oromiya including few areas of northwestern SNNPR received falls greater than 100 mm. Western half of Tigrai, most parts of western half of Amhara and western Oromiya, southeastern margin of Gambela and northwestern SNNPR received 50 – 100 mm of rainfall. The rest of the country received below 50 mm of rainfall. Little or no rainfall has been observed over south and southeastern lowlands as per normal condition. Besides less than 5 mm of rainfall has been observed over northern half of Afar.

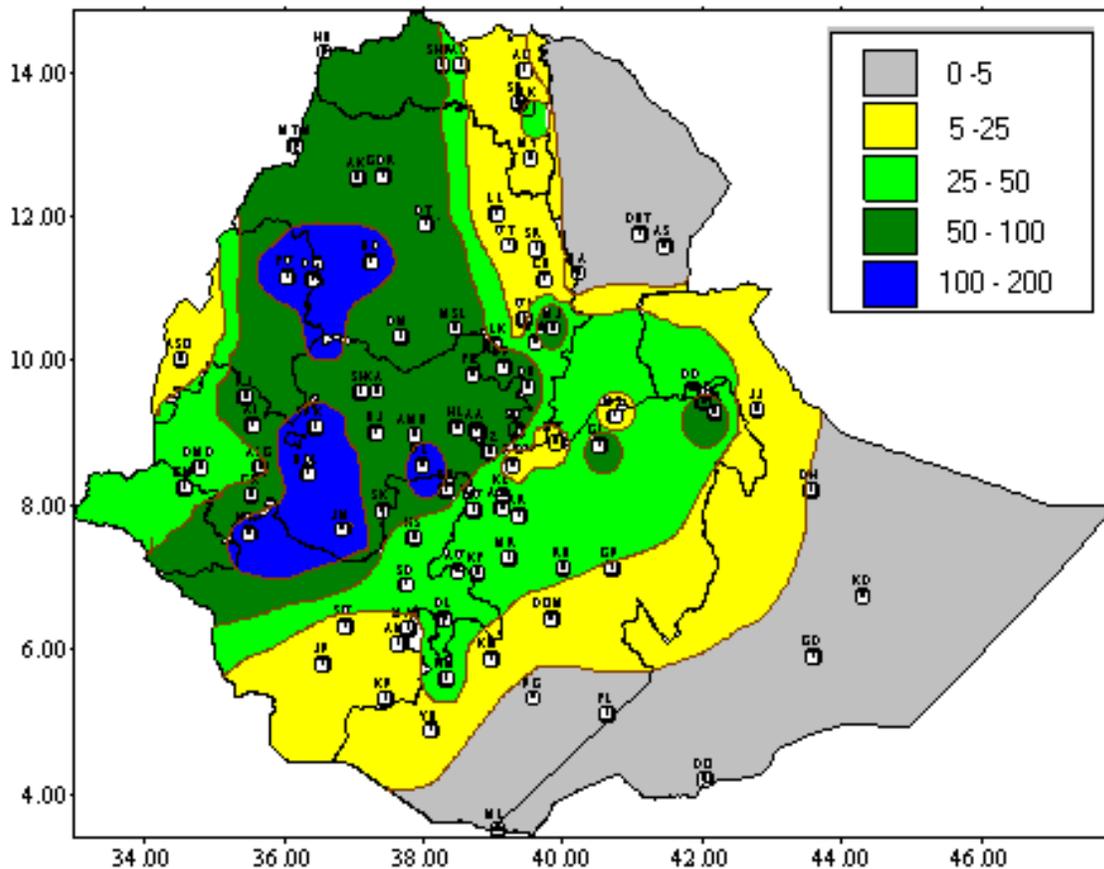


Fig 1. Rainfall distribution in mm (1-10 September, 2005)

1.2 RAINFALL ANOMALY (Fig. 2)

With the exception of northern half of Afar, eastern and southern Tigray, most parts of Benishangul Gumuz, western margin of Oromia, most parts of SNNPR including parts of Arsi and Bale zones of Oromiya the rest parts of Meher growing and few areas of southern Afar experienced normal to above normal rainfall.

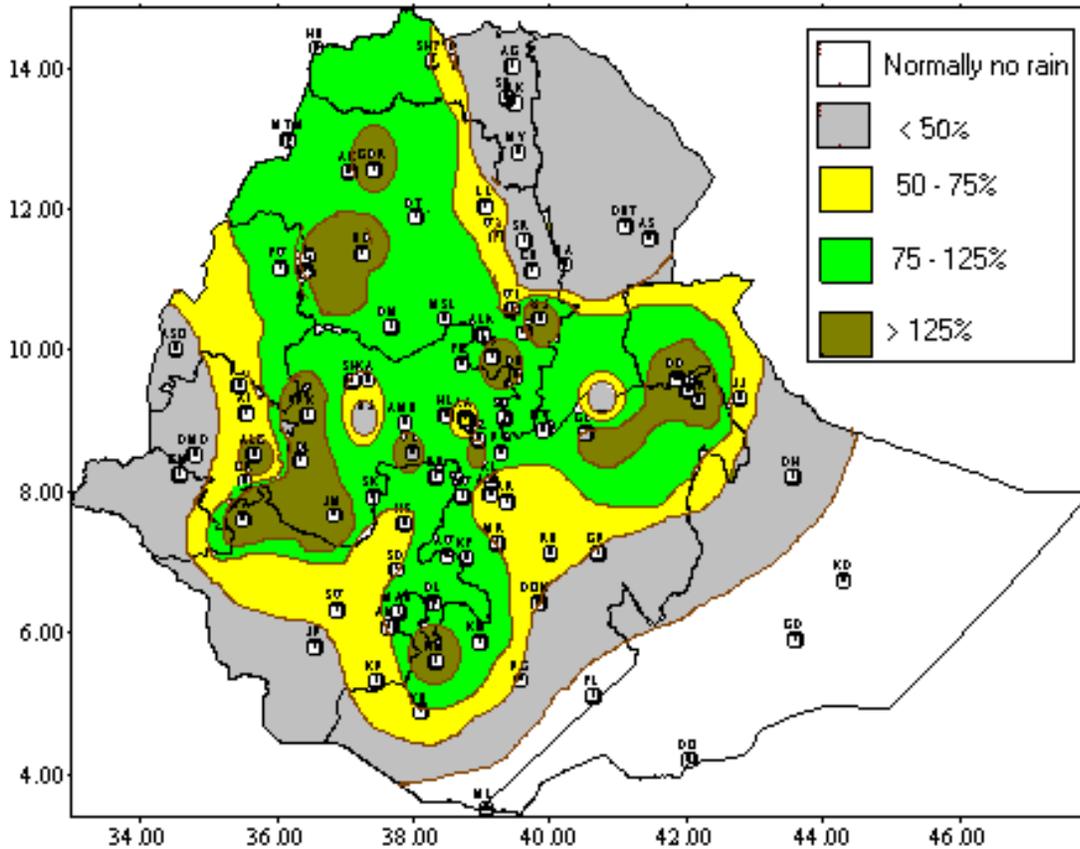


Fig.2 Percent of normal rainfall (1-10 September 2005)

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

1.3 TEMPERATURE ANOMALY

No significant air temperature anomaly was observed over most parts of the country during the dekad.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE SECOND DEKAD OF SEPTEMBER 2005

For the coming ten days, central and western portions of Tigray, Amhara, and Oromiya, Benshangul-Gumuz Gambella as well as northern half of SNNPR is highly likely to get above normal rainfall. In the contrary, eastern parts of Tigray, Amhara and Oromiya, northern Somali, Dire Dawa and Harari will have below normal rain. Moreover, southern parts of SNNPR, Borena as well as Bale and Southern Somali will start their second rainy season and its amount over most parts will be below normal. However some places will have a chance of getting close to normal rainfall.

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

3.1 VEGETATION CONDITION AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

Even though eastern and south Tigray and parts of eastern Amhara including Arsi and Bale zones of Oromiya the crop condition was in a good shape due to better rainfall observed during the dekad under review (1-10 September 2005). On the other hand some pocket areas of northwestern, western, central and eastern parts of the country received heavy falls ranging from 30-86.5 mm in one rainy day. Moreover some areas like Nekemt and Limu Genet exhibited heavy falls repeatedly for three days during the ten-day period. As a result Limu Genet reported crop damage due to hailstorm. In accordance with the crop phenological report (1-10 September 2005) harvest of Millet was underway in some areas of northeastern Benishangul-Gumuz like Bullen while at flowering and tasseling stage over west Oromiya like Limu Genet and Nedjo including eastern Oromiya like Gelemso. Sowing of teff was carried out in some areas of eastern Amhara like Sirinka while at early vegetative stage in some areas of north-eastern Benishangul-Gumuz like Bullen south-western parts of the same region like Assosa, western Amhara like Dangla, western, central and southern midlands of Oromiya (Sekoru, Kachise and Chira), eastern Amhara like Combolcha. Besides it was at tasseling and flowering in some areas of western Oromiya like Bedelle and Alge, central Oromiya like Bui and eastern Amhara like Majete. Maize was at ninth leaf and tasseling stages in some areas of western and eastern Amhara (Dangila, Bati and Majete) while at wax and full ripeness stages over western Oromiya like Nedjo, Gimbi, Bedelle, Sekoru, Aira, Dembi Dolo and Limu Genet and eastern Oromiya like Gelemso. Sorghum was at shooting stage over eastern Amhara (Bati and Majete) and western Oromiya like western Oromiya like Alge, Assosa and Aira. It was at Tasseling and flowering stages over western Oromiya like Nedjo and Gimbi, southern midland of Oromiya like Chira and northwestern Benishangul Gumuz like Mankush. Wheat was at early vegetative stage like third leaf, tillering and shooting stage in some areas of eastern Amhara like Shola Gebeya and Kombolcha and central Oromiya like Bui Fitché. Peas were at budding stage in some areas of western Oromiya like Shambu and at flowering stage over central Oromiya like Bui. Beans were at flowering stage over eastern Amhara like Shola Gebeya and over central Oromiya like Fitché and Kulumsa. Assosa, Limu Genet and Kombolcha reported weed infestation; hail damage and water logging during the first dekad of September 2005, respectively. As a result medium field condition has been observed over the areas.

3.2 EXPECTED WEATHER IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE DURING THE COMING DEKAD

The anticipated normal to above normal rainfall over western Tigray, central and western Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, western and central Oromiya, Gambela and northern SNNPR would favor crops which are found at different phenological stages and the availability of pasture and drinking water as well over pastoral and agro pastoral areas. Nevertheless there will be a possibility of heavy falls due to convective cloud at places in some pocket areas of the aforementioned areas. Thus attention should be given for proper precaution ahead of time particularly over low-lying areas and near riverbanks including in areas where the soil type is clay. On the other hand the expected deficient fall over eastern Tigray, eastern Amhara, eastern Oromiya, parts of northern Somali including Hrarari and Dire Dawa including southern portion of SNNPR would exacerbate the moisture stress of crops persisted during the preceding dekad particularly over eastern Tigray, Amhara and Oromiya. Thus proper water harvesting technique should be encouraged over the above-mentioned areas. In addition to these the expected below normal seasonal rainfall over southern SNNPR, Borena, Bale and southern portion of Somali would affect the availability of pasture and drinking water in the areas. Besides negatively affected sowing and planting activities in the agro pastoral areas of Moyale, Mega and Negele. Therefore, attention should be given to exploit any conditions of the expected moisture availability. Furthermore the expected deficient and erratic rainfall situation over the lowlands of the above mentioned areas would create favorable condition for the outbreak of pest and diseases. Hence attention should be given for sensibly approaches of pest control measures to alleviate the effect of pest outbreaks and its impact.