

1-10 March 2010 Vol.20 , No.8 Date of issue March 24, 2010

SUMMARY

During the first dekad of March 2010, Belg rain bearing weather system was strengthened over most Belg growing areas of the country. As result of this, most of Oromia, SNNPR, Somali, Harari, eastern and central Amhara, eastern and southern Tigray and Afar observed light to moderate rainfall. The situation might have a positive impact on Belg land preparation and sowing activities, perennial crops and availability of pasture and water over pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of the country.

During the second dekad the second dekad of March, 2010 much of Belg rain benefiting areas received rains in line with this, eastern Tigray, Amhara, much of Oromia and SNNPR received normal to above normal rainfall. The situation might have a positive impact generally on Belg agricultural activities; land preparation, sowing, crops at early vegetative stages, improvement of pasture and drinking water over pastoralist and agro pastoralist areas. Moreover, the rainfall activity was useful for land preparation and sowing of long cycle crops and perennial plants. The rest parts of the country received below normal rain, however, might have certain contribution seasonal agricultural activities.

1. WEATHER ASSESSMENT

1.1 11-20 March, 2010

1.1.1 RAINFALL AMOUNT (Fig.1)

Pocket areas of southern and central SNNPR and southern Oromia received 50-100 mm of rainfall. Some parts of central and southern Oromia and most parts of SNNPR received 25- 50 mm of rainfall. Eastern and central Amhara, some parts of western, southern and eastern Oromia and some parts of SNNPR received 5-25 mm of rainfall. The rest parts of the country exhibited little or no rainfall.

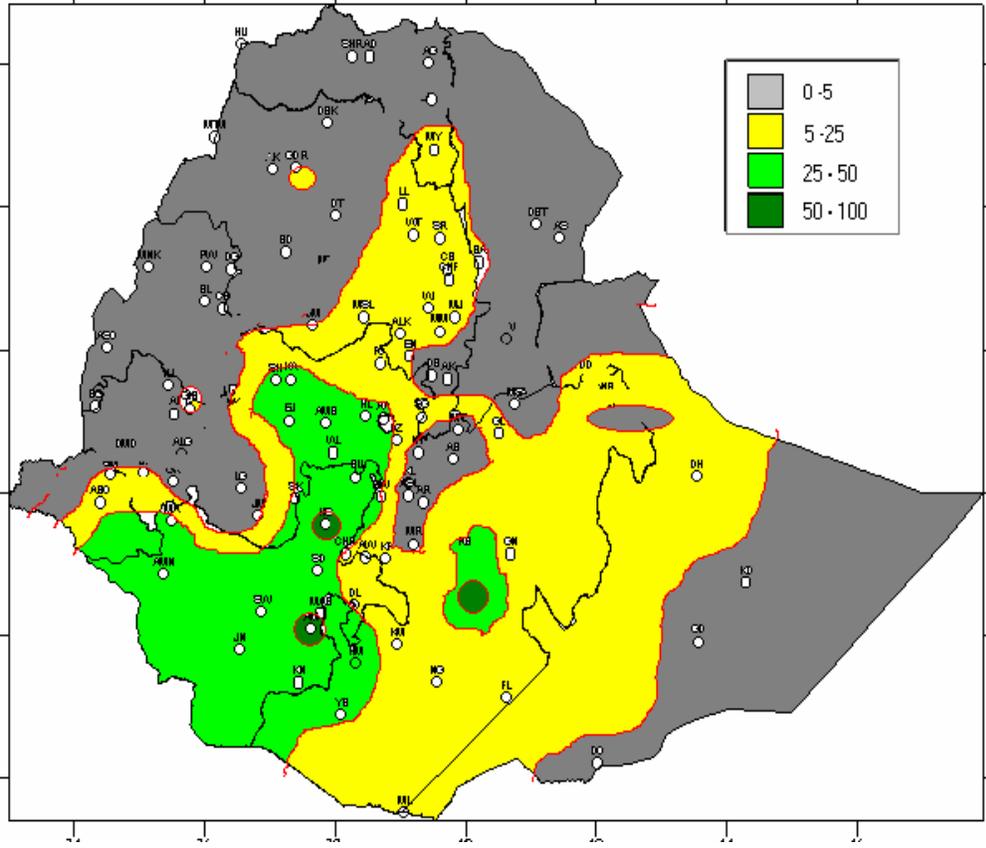


Fig 1 Rainfall distribution in mm (11-20 March, 2010)

1.1.2 RAINFALL ANOMALY (Fig. 2)

Pocket areas of northwestern Amhara, most parts of SNNPR, some parts of eastern and central Oromia and pocket areas of southern Afar and southern Somalia received normal to above normal rainfall, while the rest parts of the country exhibited below normal to much below normal rainfall.

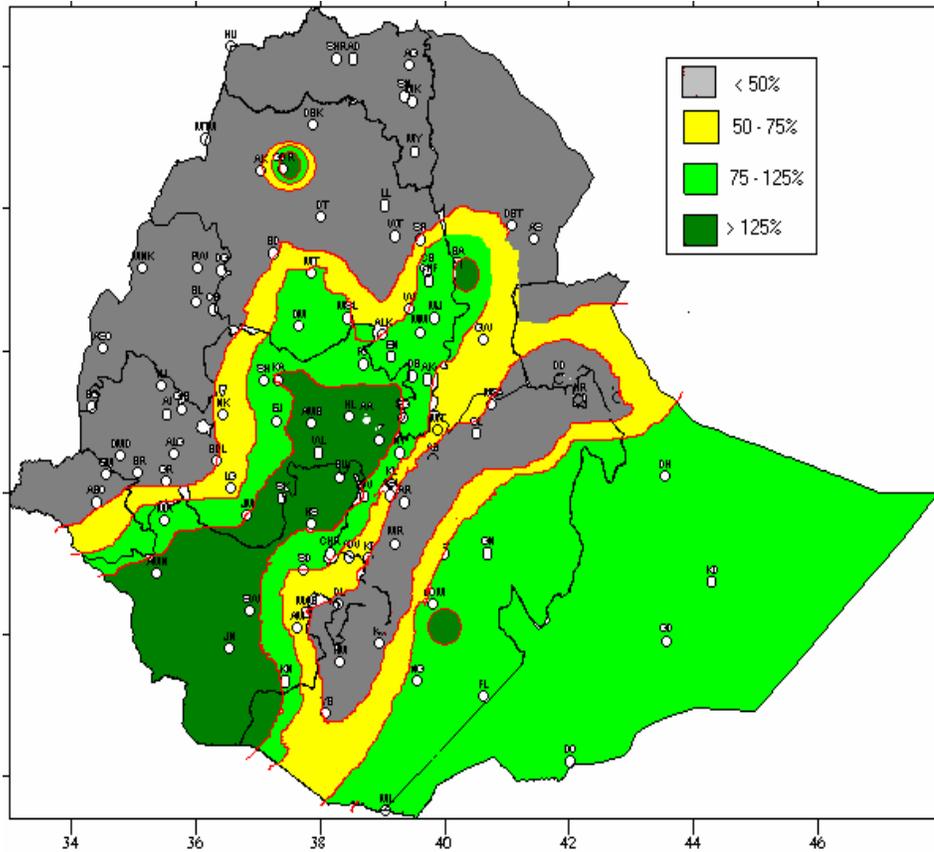


Fig.2 Percent of normal rainfall (11-20 March, 2010)

Explanatory notes for the legend:

- <50 -- Much below normal**
- 50—75% -- below normal**
- 75—125% --- Normal**
- 125% ---- Above normal**

1.1.3 TEMPERATURE ANOMALY

Some stations over lowlands of the country recorded extreme maximum temperature greater than 35°C. Gambela, Humera, Mankush, Sherkole, Gawane, Sirba Abaya, Pawe, Assayita, Semera, Dubti, Maytsemire, Metahara, Chagni, Assosa and Dire Dawa, reported 44.5, 44.0, 42.2, 41.5, 41.1, 40.0, 40.0, 39.0, 39.0, 38.7, 37.2, 36.5, 36.0 and 35.2 °C, respectively While few stations over the highlands reported extreme minimum temperature below 5.0 °C. Kofelle, Alemaya, Kulumsa and Arsi Robe recorded 1.8, 2.0, 3.5 and 4.0 °C respectively.

2. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

2.1 VEGETATION CONDITION AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

During the second dekad the second dekad of March, 2010 much of Belg rain benefiting areas received rains in line with this, eastern Tigray, Amhara, much of Oromia and SNNPR received normal to above normal rainfall. The situation might have a positive impact generally on Belg agricultural activities; land preparation, sowing, crops at early vegetative stages, improvement of pasture and drinking water over pastoralist and agro pastoralist areas. Moreover, the rainfall activity was useful for land preparation and sowing of long cycle crops and perennial plants. The rest parts of the country received below normal rain, however, might have certain contribution seasonal agricultural activities.

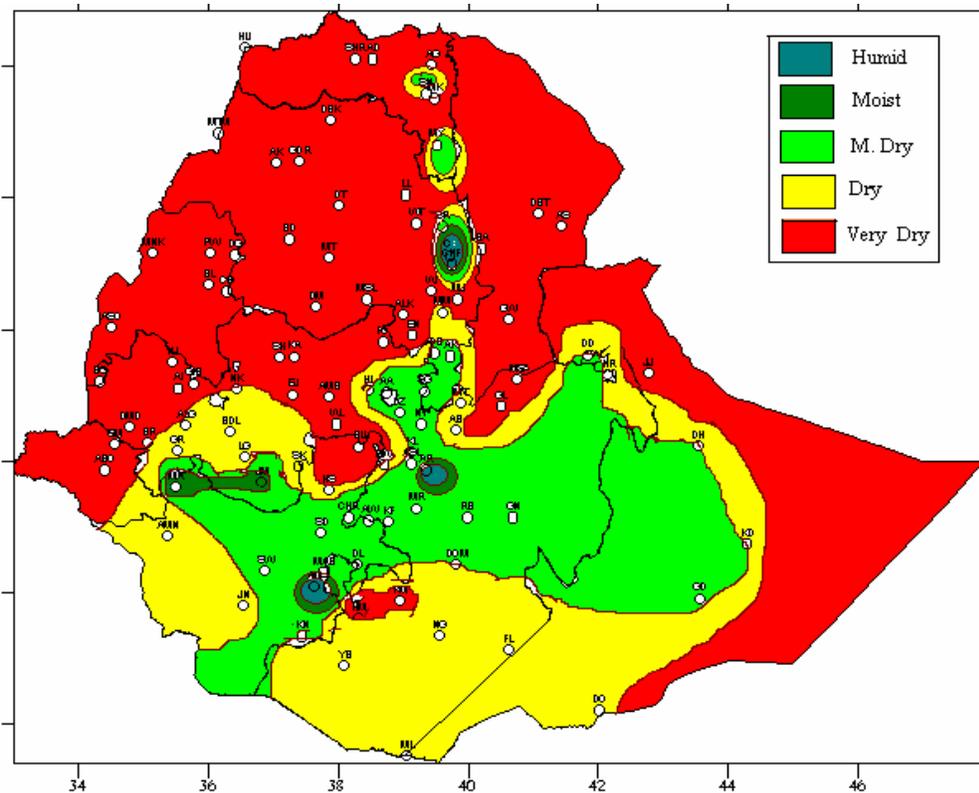


Fig.3 Moisture Status for (11-20 March, 2010)

As indicated on moisture map above, parts of western, central, eastern Oromia, northwestern Somalia, SNNPR, Dire Dawa and parts of eastern Amhara and Tigray experienced humid to moderately dry condition, while the rest parts of the country experiences dry to very dray condition. The situation might have favored Belg agricultural activities of Belg growing areas of the country as well as availability of drinking water and pasture.

2.2 EXPECTED WEATHER IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE DURING THE COMING DEKAD

In the coming ten days, rain bearing weather system expected relative to strengthen over much of Belg rain benefiting areas of the country. As a result, SNNPR, southern and central, Oromia expected to receive normal to above normal rain. While western and eastern Oromia southern and eastern Tigray, eastern Amhara, Gambela and Somali expected to receive near normal rainfall. This situation will have a positive impact on Belg crops which are at early vegetative stages, land preparation and sowing of long cycle crops as well as improvement of pasture and drinking water and perennial plants. On the other hand, much of Tigray and Amhara, Afar and Benishangul-Gumz will be dominated by cloudy weather condition which will have little rain over few areas, which will have a positive impact on agricultural activities.