

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

Nº. 2012/16

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: October 1 - 10, 2012



Government of The Gambia

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. SYNOPTIC SITUATION

The surface position of the ITD in its south bound retreat motion during this dekad, oscillated over southern parts of Mauritania slopping towards southern Mali, northern Burkina Faso and on to Niamey. Convective cloud development leading to scattered thunderstorm and rain over the Senegambia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Benin, Togo and the gulf of Guinea states. Places over Maghreb states were dry and stable with dust haze reported over Mauritania, Mali, Algeria and Niamey. The South Atlantic Pressure System (St. Helena High) intensified with a mean core value of 1035 hpa and the North Atlantic Pressure System remained quasi stationary with a central core value of 1027hpa during the early part of the dekad.

2. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, rainfall has generally decreased in terms of intensities and frequencies across the country compared with the previous dekad. Intensities ranging from 0.4mm to 44.5mm, 0.6mm to 114.8mm and 0.4mm to 37.3mm were recorded in the Western Third, Middle Third and Eastern Third respectively. The number of rainy days ranged from 3 to 5 days, thus a decrease of 4 days in both ranges. Decadal total ranging from 13.4mm to 140.3mm were recorded across the country (fig. 1a).

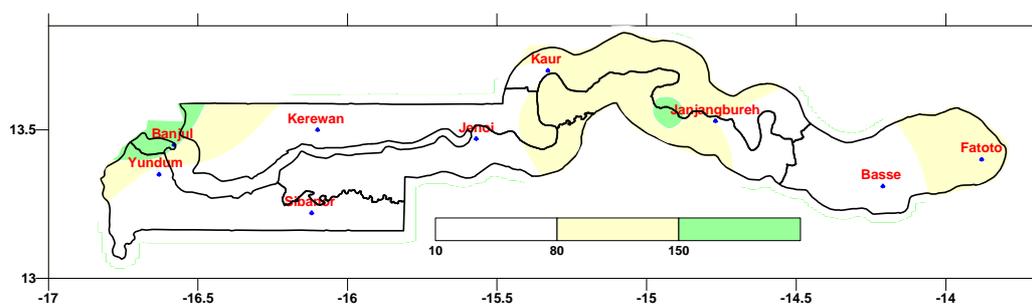


Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during October 1 – 10, 2012

The cumulative rainfall as at this dekad (May 1 to October 10, 2012) ranged from 739.0mm at Basse in the Eastern Third to 1593.7mm at Serekunda in the Western Third of the country (fig.1b). The Western Third continues to receive the highest rainfall followed by the Middle Third and then the Eastern Third.

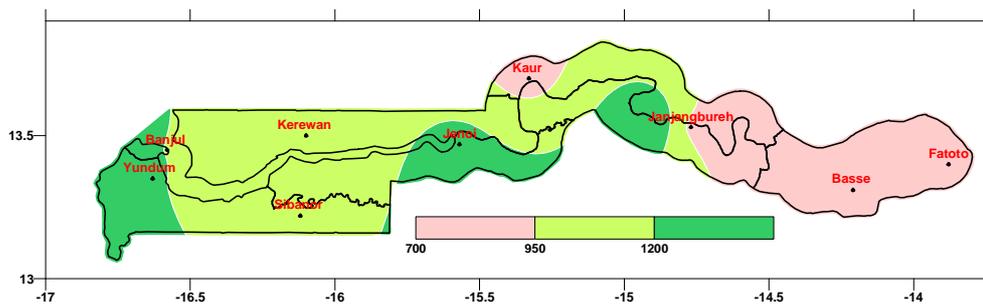


Figure 1b: Cumulative rainfall from May 1 – October 10, 2012

As at this dekad under review, rainfall recorded this year continue to record surpluses in all stations across the country except at Basse in the Eastern Third as compared with the same period last year (2011). Basse recorded a deficit of 101.4mm as compared to the long term mean (1981 – 2010) (fig. 1c).

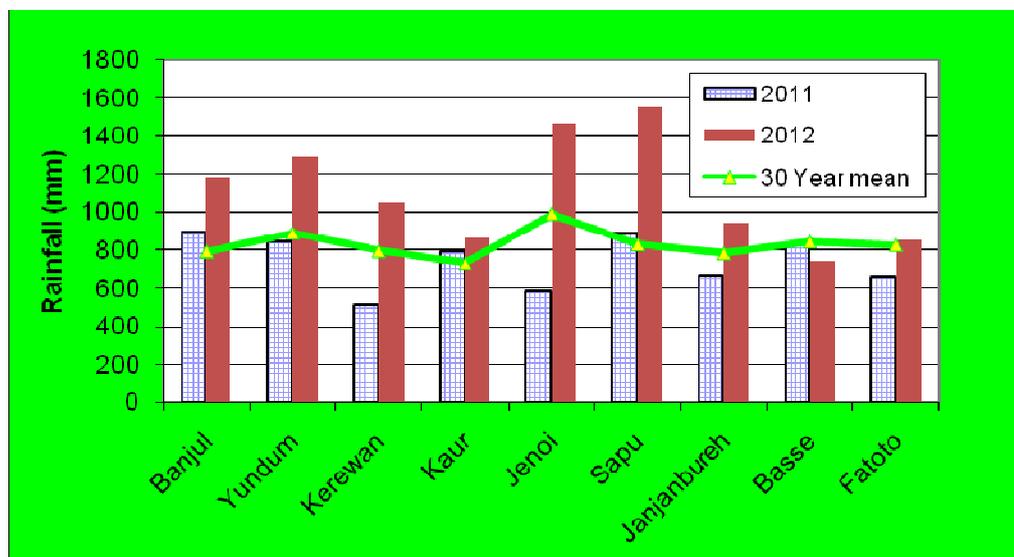


Figure 1c: Comparison of this year rainfall, against 2011 and the long-term mean

3. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT DEKAD (11 – 20 OCTOBER, 2012)

Partly cloudy and humid atmosphere with chances of thunderstorms and / or rain is expected over places during the dekad.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Temperatures during this dekad have generally increased compared to the previous dekad. This can be attributed to the low cloud cover that led to the less rainfall recorded this dekad as compared to the previous one. Minimum temperature range from 20.0 °C to 21.0 °C whilst maximum temperatures were generally 35.0 °C and above. Average temperatures recorded ranged between 27 and 28°C across the country.

Average sunshine recorded this dekad ranged between 7.3hrs to 9.0hrs representing an increase of 1.4hrs to 2.4hrs compared with the previous dekad. Evaporation from water bodies have also generally increased during this dekad as compared to the previous one.

Winds were generally light to moderate in speed, with line squalls at speeds of 64.2km/h, 35.8km/h,42.8km/h and 37.2km/h, recorded at Yundum, Sibanor, Sapu, and Basse respectively.

Average maximum Relative Humidity remained above 90%, whilst the minimum was generally above 60% during the period.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

Harvesting of maize is generally completed but groundnuts (Philippine pink) and early millet, harvesting is continuing. With regard to the late millet, its stages differ and range from shooting, flowering and grain formation. The 28 – 206 variety groundnuts are at pod hardening stage. Sorghum which is widely grown in the Upper River Region, are at different phenological stages ranging from booting, flowering and harvesting, the latter being the early variety call “Sambajabo”. Harvesting is also on going on some pockets of cultivated upland rice fields; whilst transplanting of low land rice is nearing completion across the country. However, substantial percentage of lowland rice fields have submerged mainly due to heavy rains but can also be attributed to poor preparation of fields and farmers not adhering to the rigid farming calendar.

None the less with the increment of the areas cultivated by farmers this year, because of support from the government in the form of seeds, couple with provision of farming implements and the intermittent sunshine received during the period, the yield generally would be satisfactory across the country.

6. LIVESTOCK SITUATION

Cattle are generally looking healthy across the country. However, in some places in the Central River Region North, the prevalent of respiratory disease suspected to be CBPP is reported but yet to be diagnosed to ascertain the disease. Elsewhere in the country especially at Central River Region South, the disease is confirmed. The prevalent of PPR is also reported in some areas of the country due to heavy continuous rains.

7. PEST SITUATION

Weeds have ever become a problem across the country. Blister beetles are also evident in all parts of the country and the sucking of crops at grain formation stage by blister beetles is reported but caused no major damages to fields. .

Composition of MWG:

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