
EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2013/02

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: May 11 - 20, 2013

Produced and Published by the Multidisciplinary
Working Group of the AGRHYMET Regional
Programme



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1. PROGRESS OF RAINY SEASON

The surface position of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) (imaginary boundary separating warm and moist winds from dry northerly winds over West Africa) during the dekad was on average 2 degree latitude north of the Gambia, thus continuing its seasonal northward progress. This northward movement brings along with it moist winds from the south leading to cloud formation and rains experienced in the East of the country during the latter parts of the Dekad.

Countries (Gulf of Guinea countries, Burkina Faso and Mali) to the south of south of the ITCZ experienced thunderstorms and showers and by the latter part of the dekad Guinea Bissau, Senegal and The Gambia also experienced showers and thunderstorms. However, to the north of the ITCZ dry and stable atmosphere prevailed with dust haze reported over Mauritania.

1.1 Outlook for next dekad (May 21 – 31st, 2013)

The west and central regions will be partly cloudy, dry and warm during the day for the first third of the dekad, whilst Eastern sector will be cloudy and humid with chances of showers and thunder. Overall across the country, minimum temperatures will range from 22 degrees over the coast to 26 degrees inland. By the mid of the dekad, the weather will be stable with mostly clear skies, warm afternoons and mild nights. Uncertainties will increase over the last third of the dekad with chances of rain showers and thunderstorms sweeping through the country from the East at the very end of the dekad.

2. RAINFALL SITUATION

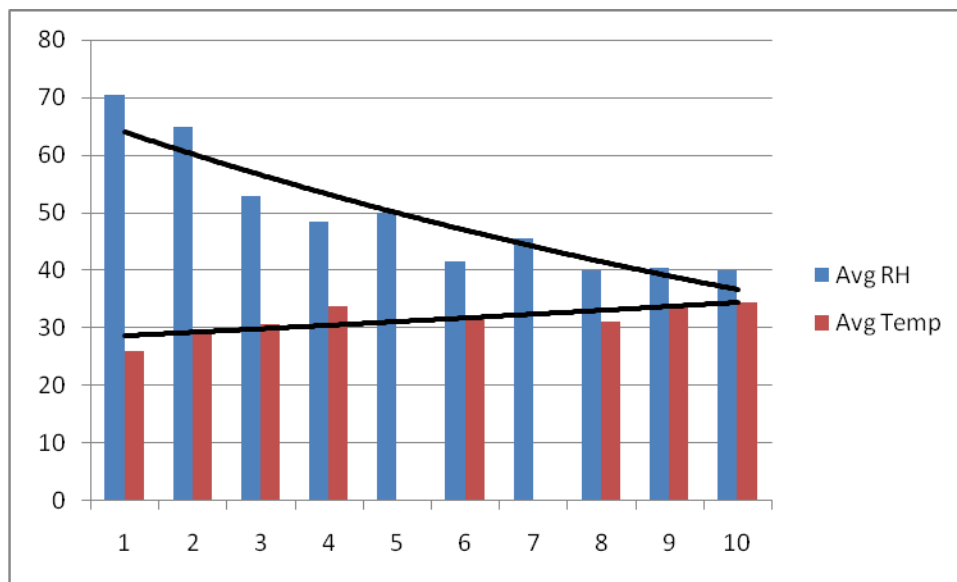
During this dekad rainfall was only recorded in the East of the country , notable at Fatoto (5.1mm), Basse (11.5)mm, Giroba (20.5)mm Janjanbureh (3.8mm) and Trace at Sapu, Elsewhere no rainfall was recorded during this dekad. Comparing this dekad's rainfall situation to the long term mean rainfall, no significant difference was recorded; only Basse recorded a surplus of 2mm.

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

As in the previous dekad, mean extreme temperatures during this dekad continued to follow a West-East gradient ranging from 26.0 °C in Banjul in west to 33.1 °C at Fatoto in the East. Likewise the lowest minimum temperature of 18.0 °C was recorded at Banjul and the highest minimum of 23.2 °C recorded at Fatoto. The highest maximum temperature of 43 °C was also recorded at Fatoto whilst the lowest maximum of 34.0°C was recorded at Banjul. The prevailing cool sea breeze continued to be a contributing factor in the temperature trend.

Average relative humidity (RH) was highest in the areas close to the coast and lowest further inland areas, with a range of 69% in the West to 50% in the East.

Winds during the dekad were generally moderate to light in speed country wide, varying from 5.4m/s to 37.1m/s.



4. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

The major farmer on-field activities are field clearing, acquisition and preparation of seeds and the repair of farming implements.