
EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2019/10

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: August 01 - 10, 2019



Government of The Gambia

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Multidisciplinary Working Group

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1. SYNOPTIC SITUATION

The mean surface position of the demarcating boundary between the dry and moist region over West Africa (Inter-Tropical Discontinuity - ITD) has its western axis oscillating over southern Mauritania, then stretching over the northern parts of Mali and Niger and onto Chad.

To the south of this position, series of convective systems developed bringing significant rains over the Gulf of Guinea States and the Sahel (Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger). North of the ITD by contrast, was rather stable, with dry weather condition, coupled with dust haze observed over parts of Morocco and Algeria.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FROM 11TH - 20TH AUGUST 2019

A slight increment in precipitation is expected in the next dekad as compared to the previous one. Generally warm and humid atmosphere will continue to persist during the period with occurrence of rain showers and thunderstorms expected to affect most part of the country on the 11th, 12th, 16th, and 17th August 2019.

3. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, there is a decrease in rainfall both in terms of intensity and distribution. In the Western Third only Sibanor recorded significant amount of rain (17.6mm), whilst the rest of the stations recorded no rainfall during the dekad. A similar situation occurred in the Middle Third where Sapu, Janjanbureh and Kaur recorded little (below 10mm) or no rainfall, although the situation was better in Jenoi with a dekad total of 36.8mm. In the Eastern Third the situation was impressive with Basse and Fatoto recording 30.9mm and 72.2mm respectively, as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Dekadal rainfall totals for individual stations for the period 01st – 10th August 2019.

Station	10-Day Total (mm)
Western Third	
Yundum Airport	0.0
Banjul	0.0
Sibanor	17.6
Kerewan	0.0
Middle Third	
Kaur	6.1
Jenoi	36.8
Janjanbureh	5.2
Sapu	0.0
Eastern Third	
Basse	30.9
Fatoto	72.2

Seasonal cumulative totals (May 1 to August 10) continues to vary significantly across the country. In the Western Third, seasonal totals ranged from 65.9mm recorded in Banjul to 385.9mm recorded in Sibanor, whilst in the Middle Third it ranged from 124.2mm in Janjanbureh to 175.8mm in Sapu. The Eastern Third recorded cumulative rainfall ranging from 267.8 in Basse to 392.4 over Fatoto (figure 1).

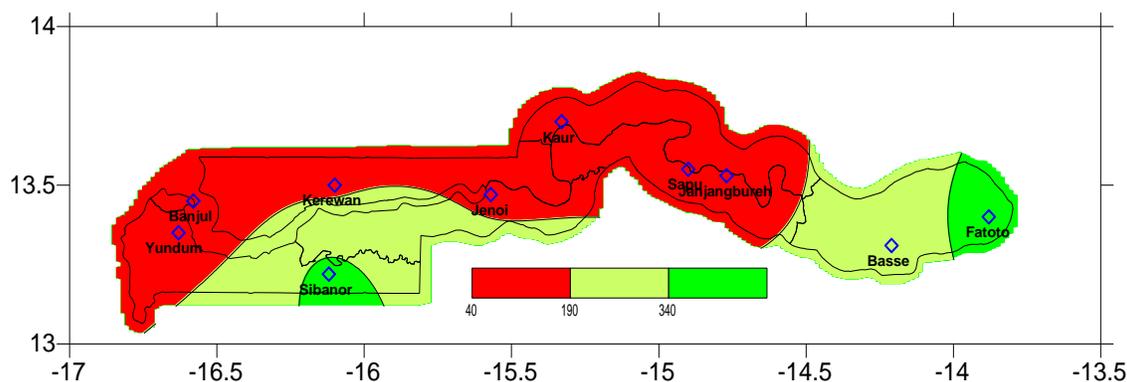


Figure 1: Seasonal rainfall totals from May 1 - August 10, 2019.

The country average as at August 10, 2019 stood at 202.0mm which is 36% below last year (425.0mm) and 44% below the normal (319.8mm) during the same period. Rainfall deficits ranging from 68.7mm over Sibanor to 270.0mm over Yundum were recorded when compared to last year during the same period (table 2).

Table 2: Seasonal Rainfall comparisons for individual stations for the period 1st May – 10th August, 2018 and the same period 1st May – 10th August, 2019.

Station name	Cumulative rainfall total as at August 10 th 2019		Cumulative rainfall total as at August 10 th 2018		Deficit/ surplus
	Rainfall in mm	Number of rainy days	Rainfall in mm	Number of rainy days	
Western Third					
Yundum Airport	110.6	12	380.6	15	-270.0
Banjul	65.9	7	232.1	12	-166.2
Sibanor	385.9	15	454.6	21	-68.7
Kerewan	161.2	8	359.7	15	-198.5
Middle Third					
Kaur	157.4	7	178.6	20	-21.2
Jenoi	165.9	11	277.4	19	-111.5
Janjanbureh	124.2	7	326.8	18	-202.6
Sapu	175.8	8	311.2	19	-135.4
Eastern Third					
Basse	267.8	13	381.0	17	-113.2
Fatoto	392.4	17	289.8	20	102.6

The table depicts that all stations in the entire country, recorded deficit when compared to the same period last year, with the exception of Fatoto in the Eastern Third of the country that recorded a surplus of 102.6mm. The deficits were aggravated by the fact that there was little or no increment in the seasonal total as some stations recorded little or no rainfall during the dekad.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Recorded mean temperatures varied between 26°C in the Eastern and Western Thirds to 30°C over the Middle Third of the country. Minimum temperature also varied between 19°C over the Eastern Third rising to 21°C and 24°C over the Western and Middle Thirds respectively; whereas maximum temperature varied between 29°C in the Western Third to 36°C over the Middle Third. Extreme temperatures showed a minimum of 15°C in the Eastern Third, and maximum temperatures of 38°C over the Middle Third of the country.

Winds were light to moderate throughout this dekad, with highest wind speed of 27km/h recorded over the Middle Third of the country.

Average sunshine recorded during this dekad varied between 3hours over the Eastern Third to 7hours over the rest of the country.

Minimum Relative Humidity (RH %) recorded across the country was 40%, whereas Maximum RH recorded was above 80% across the country.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

The agricultural situation in the country during this dekad was dominated by weeding on major field crops and cereals. In the west coast region, sowing is almost completed except for few farmers engaged in reseeding and planting of cassava and other tubers. Some farmers have started fertilizer application, whereas vegetable growers are engaged in nursery raising, transplanting and weeding on their farms. Earlier shown crops are growing better although the prolonged dry spells that hit the country delayed their growth as crops are at vegetative stages and requires enough moisture to grow.

In the Central River Region North, farmers are engaged in weeding which is almost completed for the upland fields, Threshing and milling is in progress for Tidal fields which are generally good as they were not affected by floods this year, whereas in the rainy season tidal fields, ploughing, nursery and transplanting is ongoing. Earlier sown groundnut fields are flowering while some early millet are almost at booting stages. However crops are not growing as expected due to lack of enough rain, some farmers have not sown their seeds at all.

In the Upper River Region the situation is similar to other regions. Farmers have taking advantage of the long dry spells to weed on their farms, although earlier sown crops like maize and groundnut are at advanced vegetative stages but also not spared by the prolonged dry spells. Some farmers have not applied fertilizer due to lack of rains. Like in other regions some farmers in this region too kept their seeds in anticipation for enough rains as a result they might not sow them at all.

Banjul August 12, 2019.

National MWG of The Gambia

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