NATIONAL METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES AGENCY
TEN DAY AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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SUMMARY

During the first dekad of December 2004, with the exception of eastern Oromiya, parts of southern Oromiya and pocket areas of central and western Oromiya, parts of southern Amhara, pocket areas of eastern Benishangul-Gumuz, pocket areas of northern Somali, western half of SNNPR as well as southeastern Gambella the rest portions of the country experienced below normal rainfall. The observed normal to above normal rainfall over western Oromiya, eastern and western Hararge, parts of southern Amhara negatively affected the on going harvest and post harvest activities of long and medium cycle crops over the aforementioned areas. The highlands of western, eastern and central Oromiya, southern and northeastern Amhara as well as southern Tigray exhibited extreme minimum air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days.

During the second dekad of December 2004, the prevailing weather situation favoured the on going harvest and post harvest activities over much of Meher growing areas of the country. As a result, harvest and post harvest activities were under way in most places. With regard to air temperature, the highlands of eastern Oromiya (Alemaya), southeastern Amhara (Debre Birhan), eastern Amhara (Wegel Tena) and western Amhara (Dangila) exhibited extreme air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days. Thus, this condition would affect the normal growth and development of the exciting crops like horticultural and perennial crops. In accordance with crop phenological report, sorghum was at ripeness stage over southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz (Assosa). Maize was at full ripeness stage over southern Oromiya (Doll Mena). Millet was at flowering stage over western Amhara (Chagni) and southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz. Teff was at ripeness stage over central Oromya (Fitche and Kachissei) and southern Oromiya (Kibire Mengist). Wheat was at ripeness stage over eastern Amhara (Wegel Tena) and southern Oromiya (Kibre Mengist). Nug was at yellow ripeness stage over some areas of central Oromiya. There was no adverse weather condition reported during the dekad under review.

1. WEATHER ASSESSMENT

1.1 RAINFALL AMOUNT (Fig. 1)

During the second dekad of December, better rainfall condition is observed over western half of SNNPR, pocket areas of northeastern SNNPR, southern Half of Gambela, pocket areas of central and eastern Amhara recorded rainfall fall amount ranging 5-25 mm of rainfall. There was little or no rainfall for the rest parts of the country.

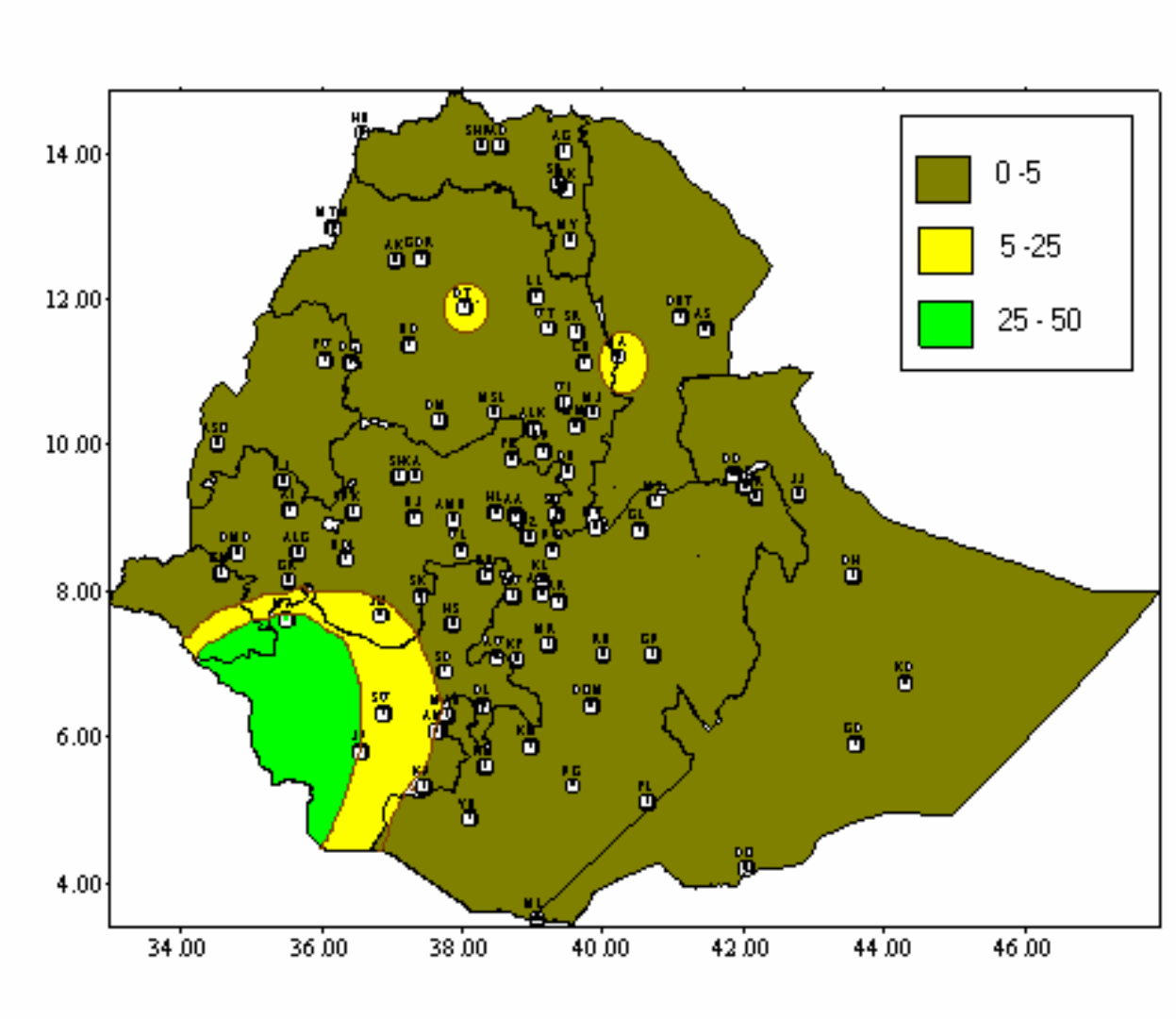

Fig 1. Rainfall distribution in mm (11-20, December 2004)

1.2 RAINFALL ANOMALY (Fig. 2)

With the exception of western Amhara, parts of central Amhara the rest parts of the country experienced below normal rainfall condition.

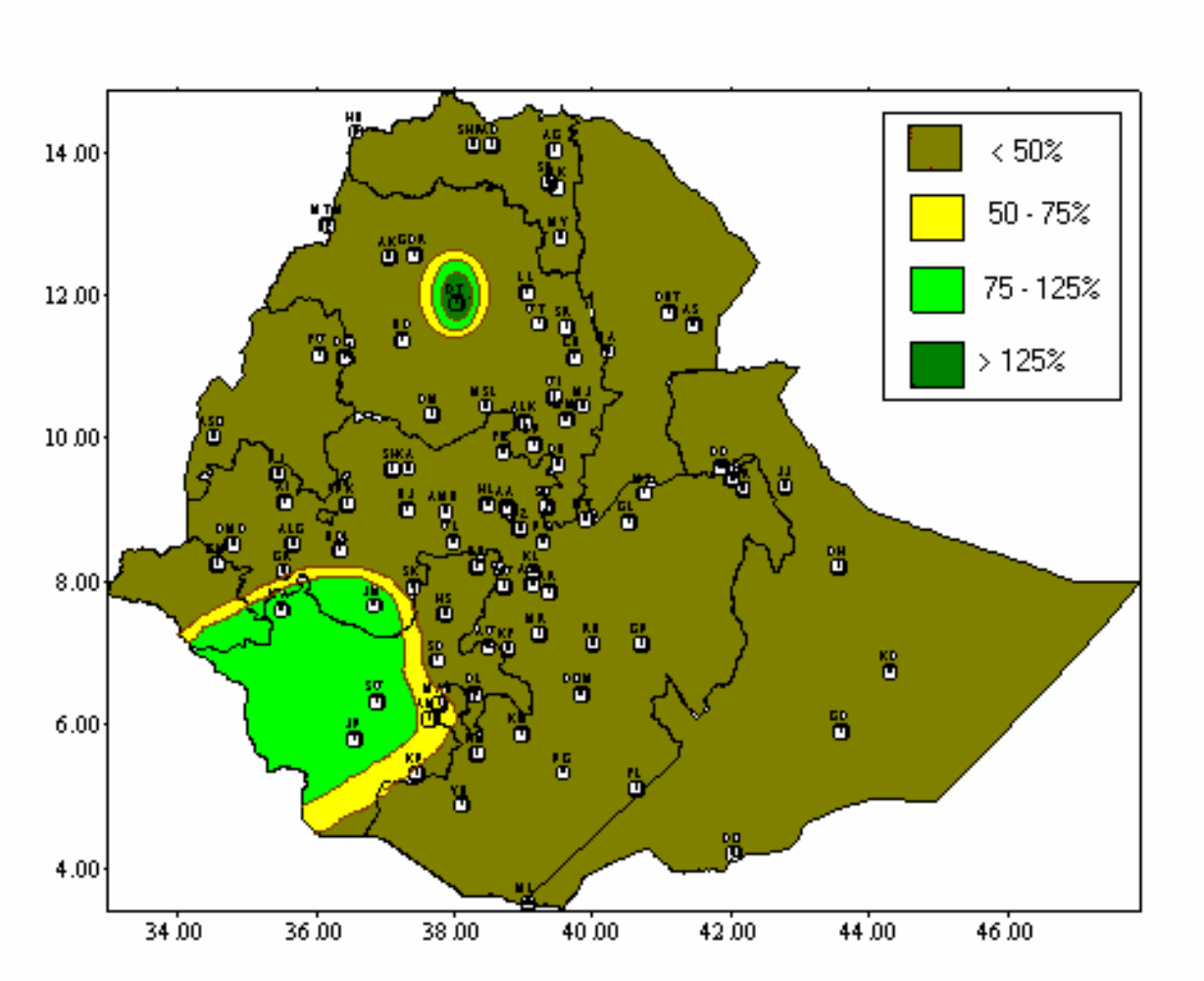

Fig.2 Percent of normal rainfall (11-20, December 2004)

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

1.3 TEMPERATURE ANOMALY

The highlands of western, southern and northern Amhara as well as eastern Oromiya, exhibited minimum air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days. For instance, Dangila, Wegel Tena, Debre Birhan and Alemaya experienced extreme air temperature as low as 4.6, 2.1, 1.3 and 1.0 ^{0}C, respectively.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE THIRD DEKAD OF DECEMBER 2004

In the coming ten days, the Bega's dry and sunny weather condition is expected to dominate over most parts of the country. During the first days of the pentad, however, there will be an incursion of moisture towards our country. Hence, partly cloudy condition will dominate over eastern highlands and southwestern Ethiopia will have isolated rains at places. In general, western Oromiya, western portion of SNNPR and Gambela will have isolated rains. Afar, Tigray, most parts of Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Somali, most parts of Oromiya and eastern SNNPR will be under dry weather condition.

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

3.1 VEGETATION CONDITION AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

The prevailing weather situation during the second dekad of December 2004 favoured the on going harvest and post harvest activities over much of Meher growing areas of the country. As a result, harvest and post harvest activities were under way in most places. With regard to air temperature, the highlands of eastern Oromiya (Alemaya), southeastern Amhara (Debre Birhan), eastern Amhara (Wegel Tena) and western Amhara (Dangila) exhibited extreme air temperature below 5^0C for two to seven consecutive days. Thus, this condition would affect the normal growth and development of the exciting crops like horticultural and perennial crops. In accordance with crop phenological report, sorghum was at ripeness stage over southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz (Assosa). Maize was at full ripeness stage over southern Oromiya (Doll Mena). Millet was at flowering stage over western Amhara (Chagni) and southwestern Benishangul-Gumuz. Teff was at ripeness stage over central Oromya (Fitche and Kachissei) and southern Oromiya (Kibire Mengist). Wheat was at ripeness stage over eastern Amhara (Wegel Tena) and southern Oromiya (Kibre Mengist). Nug was at yellow ripeness stage over some areas of central Oromiya. There was no adverse weather condition reported during the dekad under review.

3.2 EXPECTED WEATHER IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE DURING THE COMING DAKAD

With the exception of isolated areas of western Oromya and few areas of SNNPR the anticipated dry and sunny weather situation over most parts of Meher growing areas would favour the on going harvest and post harvest activities. Thus, farmers should exploit the expected conducive weather situation properly to perform their activities like harvesting, collecting harvested crops in the field, threshing and storing harvested crops to the barn.

On the other hand, the dry and windy Bega's weather situation would create favourable condition for the expansion of fire. Thus, farmers should under take proper precaution when they use fir around the crop fields and the barn in places where the dried grains are collected in order to avoid the risk due to fire hazard.