11-20 March 2008 Vol. 18 No. 8 **Date of issue March 24, 2008**

SUMMARY

During the first dead of March, dry and sunny condition was dominated over most parts of the country, in line with this observed an increase in maximum temperature over lowlands of the country that have an impact on the rate of evapo-transpiration to increase, hence, the condition might have caused moisture stress on perennial crops, availability of pasture and drinking water. Little rain was received over areas of southern, southwestern and SNNPR and might have benefited perennial crops, availability of pasture and drinking water.

During the second dekad of March 2008, with the exception of little rainfall observed over some areas of southwestern and southern parts of the country, most parts of the country exhibited sunny and dry weather condition. Besides, central and western half of the country experienced partly cloudy condition. The exhibited rainfall over some station in south and south western parts of the country was with the range of (10-30.2) mm in one rainy days. This situation is not enough moisture in terms of crop water requirement. However, it could minimize the stress condition persisted during the preceding dekads. Besides, it should favor areas where Belg agricultural activities start's earlier. (Land preparation and sowing activities.) The exhibited high temperature due to moisture stress could have a negative impact by increasing evapo-transpiration, for the availability of pasture and drinking water and for perennial crops as well. The (RR/PET) Rainfall divided by potential evapo-transpiration map shows that with the exception of south and southwestern parts of the country. The rest parts of the country observed dry weather situation. This situation shows the moisture is not enough in terms of crop water requirement for Belg agricultural activities.

1. WEATHER ASSESSMENT

1.1 11-20 March 2008

1.1.1 RAINFALL AMOUNT (Fig.1)

Pocket area of southern SNNPR experienced 25-50 mm rainfall. Some parts of western and southern Oromia, pocket areas of central and tip of eastern and northwestern SNNPR and tip of northern Gambela received 5-25 mm rainfall. The rest parts of the country exhibited little or no rainfall.

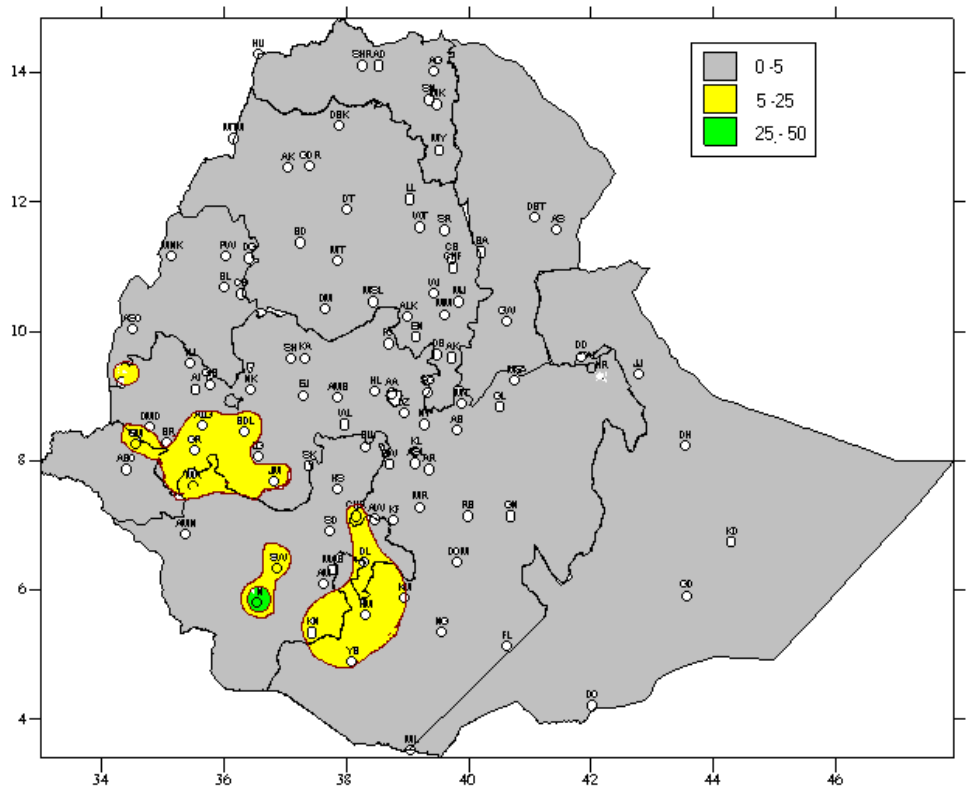

Fig 1. Rainfall distribution in mm (11-20 March 2008)

1.1.2 RAINFALL ANOMALY (Fig. 2)

Pocket areas of northern Gambela, western, and southern Oromia and northern SNNPR received normal to above normal rainfall. The rest parts of the country exhibited below normal to much below normal rainfall.

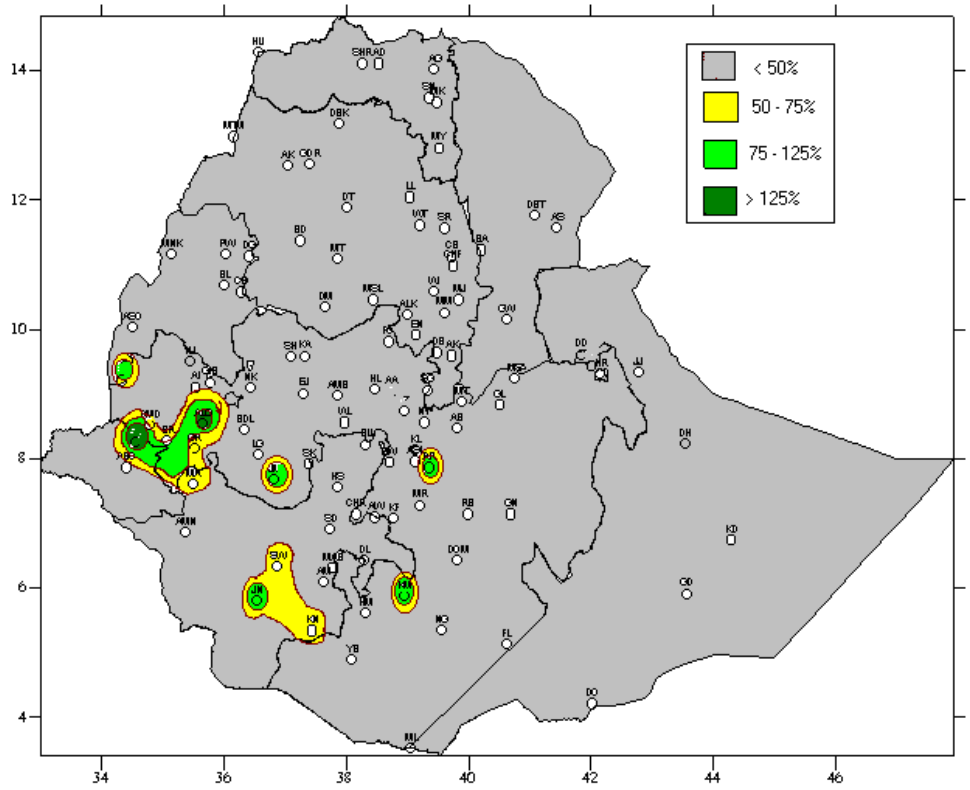

Fig.2 Percent of normal rainfall (11-20 March 2008)

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 recorded extreme Maximum temperature above 35^{o} C. Humera, Gambela, Metema, Mankush, Dubti, Pawe, Shoa-Robit, Gode Methara, Mytisemre, Arba Minch, Liber, and Sawla recorded extreme maximum temperature as high as 42.1, 41.5, 41.0, 40.2, 39.0, 38.8, 38.3, 38.2, 38.0, 36.5, 35.7, 35.5 and 35.5^{0}C respectively. This condition might have affected the normal growth of crops and plants as well as living condition of livestock over the aforementioned areas.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE THIRD DEKAD OF MARCH 2008

During the last dekad of March, Belg rain benefiting areas should get substantial amount of rain in a normal condition. In contrast, in the coming ten-days, dry, sunny and hot weather condition will continue to dominate most parts of the country. However, due to anticipation of relative moisuture incurision, southwestern and southern Ethiopia likely to get rainfshowers.

In general, SNNPR, western and southern Oromia as well as Gambela are expected to get near normal rainfall. Likewise, eastern Tigray, eastern and central Amhara, Bensahngul-Gumz, highlands of northern Somali and central and eastern Oromia will receive light rain showers at few places from the afternoon developing clouds. And, the rainfall pattern will be below normal. West Tigray, west Amhara and much of Somali, however, remain dry, sunny and hot. Afar will also continue to be hot. Moreover, the daily maximum temperature is anticipated to further rise over lowland areas of the country.

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

3.1 VEGETATION CONDITION AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

With the exception of little rainfall observed over some areas of southwestern and southern parts of the country, most parts of the country exhibited sunny and dry weather condition. Besides, central and western half of the country experienced partly cloudy condition. The exhibited rainfall over some station in south and south western parts of the country was with the range of (10-30.2) mm in one rainy days. This situation is not enough moisture in terms of crop water requirement. However, It could minimize the stress condition persisted during the preceding dekads. Besides, it should favored areas where Belg agricultural activities start's earlier. (Land preparation and sowing activities.) The exhibited high temperature due to moisture stress could have a negative impact by increasing evapo-transpiration, for the availability of pasture and drinking water and for perennial crops as well. The (RR/PET) Rainfall divided by potential evapo-transpiration map shows that with the exception of south and southwestern parts of the country, the rest parts of the country observed dry weather situation. This situation shows the moisture is not enough interms of crop water requirement for Belg agricultural activities.

3.2 EXPECTED WEATHER IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE DURING THE COMING DEKAD

The anticipated near normal rainfall over Gambela, SNNPR, south and western Oromia would favor season agricultural activities like land preparation and sowing activities in areas where the activities are under question. And for perennial crops as well. Besides, the expected below normal rainfall over few areas of central and eastern Oromia will have a negative impact for season's agricultural activities over the aforementioned areas. Moreover, the anticipated dry and sunny weather condition over some areas of Afar will have a negative contribution for the availability of pasture and drinking water for pastoral and agro pastoral areas. In general the rise in extreme maximum temperature over the lowlands areas of the country would create favorable situation for the outbreak of fire. Thus the concerned personnel should take preventive measure in order to minimize the risk.