

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2019/11

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: August 11 - 20, 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 ITD, a boundary layer that separates the dry North-Easterly Trade winds from the moist South-Westerly winds has its western axis oscillating over south-western Mauritania, northern parts of Mali and Niger; and then sloping onto northern Chad.

The places to the north of the ITD experienced dry and stable atmosphere with dust haze observed over parts of Algeria and Egypt. However, places to the south of this position experienced convective activities resulting to rain showers and occasional thunderstorms over Sahel region and the Gulf of Guinea States.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT DEKAD (21TH - 31ST AUGUST 2019)

The highly saturated atmosphere will be mostly warm and humid with series of convective activities and enhanced precipitation over the country during the period. The dekad is expected to be generally wet throughout, with **significant precipitations on the 22nd, 25th and 26th August 2019** that could generate flash flooding.

3. RAINFALL SITUATION

This dekad's rainfall has seen an improvement particularly in daily amounts as compared to the previous ones, although with high variations. Single day heavy downpour of over 100mm was recorded over Sibantor and Kerewan both in the Western Third of the country (Table 1). End of dekad totals ranged from 29.3mm to 237.8mm in the Western Third, 49.7mm to 147.1mm in the Middle Third and from 135.9mm to 138.0mm over the Eastern Third. Figure 1a depicts a high variation in the distribution of rainfall intensities during this dekad, with the extreme western part of the country recording little rainfall (less than 40mm) during the dekad.

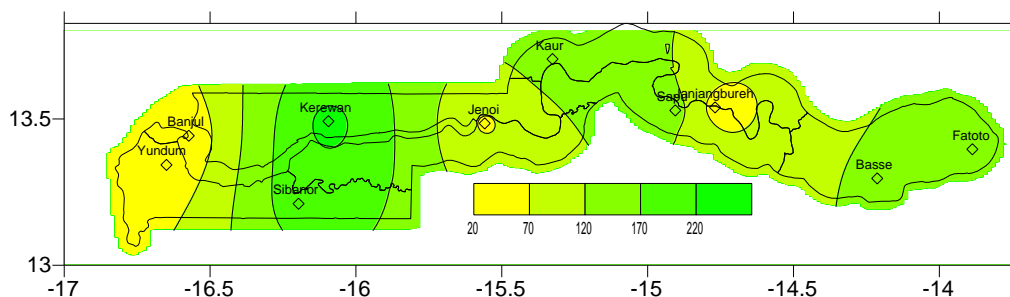


Figure 1a: Dekadal rainfall totals from 11th – 20th August 2019

Table 1: Dekadal rainfall totals and rainfall extremes for the period 11th – 20th August 2019.

Station Name	Dekadal Total (mm)	Daily rainfall extremes ≥ 50 mm	
		Amount in mm	Date Recorded
Western Third			
Yundum	29.3		
Banjul	31.1		
Sibanor	200.5	109.0	17 th
Kerewan	237.8	121.0 / 61.9	17 th / 20 th
Middle Third			
Kaur	147.1	71.4 / 52.4	11 th / 17 th
Jenoi	61.2		
Janjanbureh	49.7		
Sapu	142.2	72.1	17 th
Eastern Third			
Basse	135.9	77.4 / 53.2	16 th / 20 th
Fatoto	138.3	85.5	17 th

Seasonal cumulative totals also improved significantly but also vary. In the Western third, Sibanor has the highest cumulative total of **457.2mm**, in the Middle third Sapu recorded the highest (**318.0mm**); while in the Eastern third, the highest was recorded over Fatoto (**530.7mm**), highest countrywide, figure 1b, below.

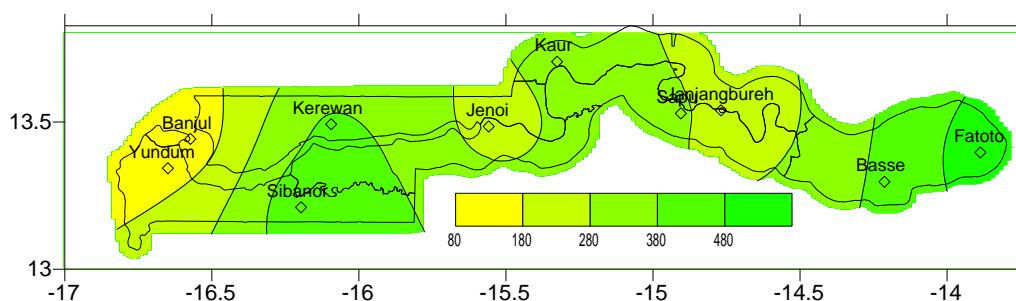


Figure 1b: Seasonal rainfall totals 1st May – 20th August 2019.

Table 2 : Seasonal Rainfall comparisons for the period 1st May - 20th August, 2018 and 1st May - 20th August, 2019.

Station name	Cumulative rainfall total as at August 20 th 2018		Cumulative rainfall total as at August 20 th 2019		Deficit/surplus	Length of dry spells ≥ 4 days
	Rainfall in mm	Number of rainy days	Rainfall in mm	Number of rainy days		
WESTERN THIRD						
Yundum	388.4	14	139.9	17	-248.5	4
Banjul	-	-	97.0	9	-	6
Sibanor	519.1	17	457.2	21	-61.9	-
Kerewan	382.0	10	399.0	13	17.0	-
MIDDLE THIRD						
Kaur	208.2	9	304.5	13	96.3	-
Jenoi	278.6	12	240.7	15	-37.9	-
Janjanbureh	332.0	8	173.9	12	-158.1	4
Sapu	311.2	8	318.0	13	6.8	4
EASTERN THIRD						
Basse	477.1	18	403.7	16	-73.4	4
Fatoto	359.0	20	530.7	20	171.7	-

In comparison, this year's country average as at 20th August 2019 stood at 306.4mm, which is 13% below last year same period (353.7mm), and 32.8% below the country average (1981_2010), which is 456.0mm.

Table 2 above shows the comparison between rainfall recorded in 2019 and that of last year 2018 same period. The number of stations recording surplus has increase from one in the previous dekad to four during this present dekad. However, Yundum in the Western Third and Janjanbureh in the Middle Third still have significant deficits of over 150mm.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Recorded mean temperatures varied between 24°C over Fatoto in the Eastern Third to 29°C over the rest of the country. Minimum temperature also varied between 18°C over the Eastern Third rising to 24°C over the Middle; whereas maximum temperature varied between 29°C over the Middle Third to 33°C over the rest of the country. Extreme temperatures reached a minimum of 17°C in the Eastern Third, and maximum temperatures of 37°C over the Middle Third of the country.

Winds were light to moderate during the dekad, with maximum wind gust of 64km/h recorded over the Middle Third of the country. Average sunshine recorded during this dekad reduced significantly due to increased cloud coverage but also varied, between 2 hours over the Eastern Third to 7 hours over the Middle Third of the country. Minimum Relative Humidity (RH %) recorded across the country was 40%, whereas Maximum RH recorded was above 90% across the country.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

The agricultural situation in the country during this dekad has shown some improvements due to increase in soil moisture content, recorded during the dekad favorably exceeding evaporation in almost all the regions. In the North Bank Region, crops that were earlier planted continues to do better some of these fields are at advanced vegetative stages while few millet fields are at panicle initiation. Some groundnut fields are flowering and pegging as well. Most farmers have finished weeding in the upland fields, while few are on ploughing for water melon and cowpea cultivation. Some vegetable growers have started harvesting okra, sorrel etc whilst others are on land preparation in wetland fields for rice cultivation.

Banjul August 22, 2019.

National MWG of The Gambia

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