

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2019/07

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: July 1 - 10, 2019



Government of The Gambia

Produced and Published by The Gambia National
Multidisciplinary Working Group

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1. SYNOPTIC SITUATION

The mean surface position of the Inter-Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) have its western axis over northern Senegal stretching across Southeast Mauritania, central parts of Mali, Niger and then slanting onto Chad. The places to the north of the ITD were characterized by dry and stable atmosphere, with dust haze reported over far northeast Mali, southern Algeria and southwest of Libya. However, places to the south of the ITD were dominated by rain and thunderstorms which affected much of West African sub-region.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT DEKAD (11TH- 20TH JULY 2019)

The atmosphere will continue to remain humid with relatively warm conditions, especially in the afternoons. Rains and thunderstorms, occasionally associated with strong winds are expected to affect the country on the 12th, 17th and 19th July 2019 with higher intensity over the eastern sector of the country. Most of the occurrence will be confined to late evenings into the nights.

3. RAINFALL SITUATION

The rainfall situation in this dekad varied greatly, with dekadal totals highest in the Eastern and Middle parts of the country as compared to the Western Third. Fatoto and Basse, both in the Eastern Third recorded dekadal total of 74.2mm and 61.4mm respectively. In the Middle Third, Kaur recorded the highest dekadal total of above 80mm, Sapu recorded above 50mm whereas Jenoi and Janjanbureh both recorded dekadal totals less than 20mm, (figure 1a) below.

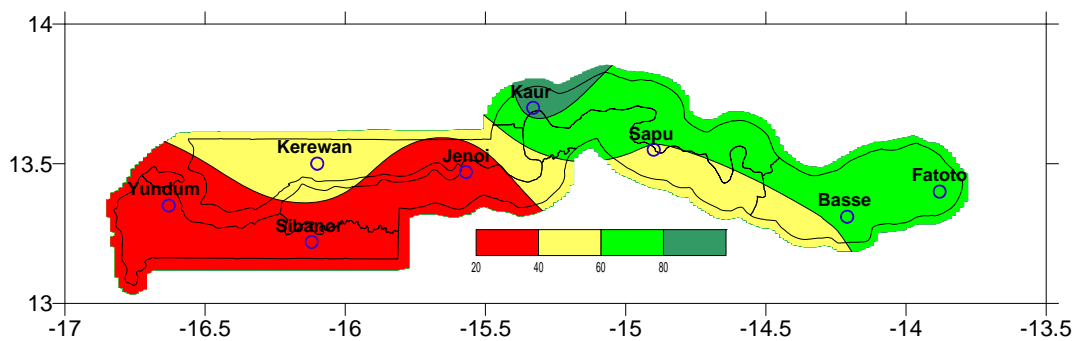


Figure 1a: Dekadal rainfall totals from 1st - 10th July 2019.

Seasonal cumulative rainfall also indicates similar variations cross the country. In the Eastern Third, Basse recorded the highest seasonal total of 154.4mm, while Fatoto in the same region recorded 147.7mm. In the Middle Third, the highest seasonal total was recorded over Sapu (161.4mm), highest countrywide, followed by Kaur, 101.6mm. However overall rainfall situation over the entire Western Third is still not very impressive, the highest seasonal total recorded is 81.0mm over Kerewan, whilst the rest: Yundum Airport, Banjul and Sibanon all recorded seasonal totals less than 50mm, (figure 1b) below.

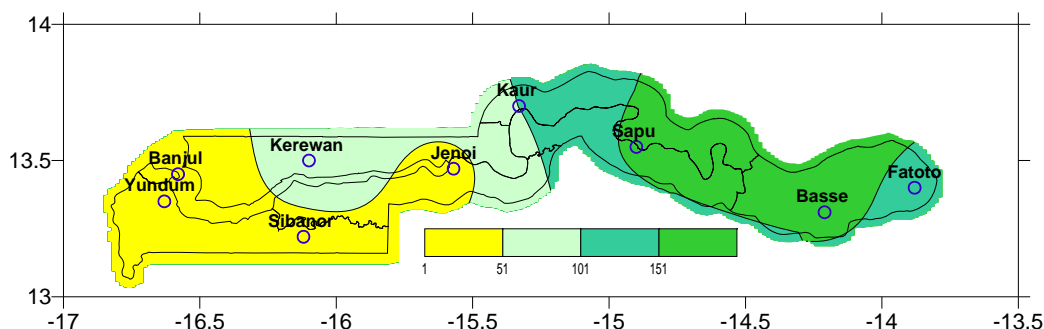


Figure 1b: Seasonal rainfall totals from 1st May - 10th July 2019.

In comparison, this year's country average as at 10th July 2019 is 86.0mm, which is 27% below last year during the same period (118.3mm), and 31% below the long-term country average (1981 - 2010) of 125.5mm. Seasonal deficits ranging from about 50mm to about 125mm were recorded in the Western half of the country (table 1) when compared to the preceding year (2018). Meanwhile, in the Eastern half of the country, surpluses ranging from about 7mm to about 85mm were recorded.

Table 1: Comparison of 2018 and 2019 seasonal rainfall for individual stations.

| Station name | Cumulative rainfall total as at July 10 th 2018 | | Cumulative rainfall total as at July 10 th 2019 | | Comparison (2019 -2018) |
|----------------------|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|-------------------------|
| | Rainfall (mm) | Number of rainy days | Rainfall (mm) | Number of rainy days | |
| WESTERN THIRD | | | | | |
| Yundum | 167.1 | 6 | 42.6 | 5 | -124.5 |
| Banjul | 106.2 | 6 | 9.4 | 1 | -96.8 |
| Sibanor | 220.3 | 6 | 36.8 | 4 | -183.5 |
| Kerewan | 150.2 | 5 | 81.0 | 3 | -69.2 |
| MIDDLE THIRD | | | | | |
| Jenoi | 85.8 | 10 | 36.0 | 3 | -49.8 |
| Kaur | 61.7 | 6 | 101.5 | 4 | 39.8 |
| Janjanbureh | 82.5 | 7 | 89.3 | 5 | 6.8 |
| Sapu | 77.0 | 6 | 161.4 | 6 | 84.4 |
| EASTERN THIRD | | | | | |
| Basse | 130.8 | 9 | 154.4 | 8 | 23.6 |
| Fatoto | 102.3 | 9 | 147.7 | 9 | 45.4 |

Table 1 show that the rainfall situation is still not yet favorable especially in the Western parts of the country. The dekad has also witnessed the existence of dry spells ranging from 4 to 8 days, consequently delaying agricultural activities especially sowing in most parts of the country.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Recorded mean temperatures dropped slightly when compared to the last dekad, thus varied between 26°C in the Eastern Third to 30°C over the Middle Third of the country. Minimum temperature also varied between 18°C over the Eastern Third to 24°C over the Middle Third; whereas maximum temperature varied between 33°C in the Western Third and 39°C over the Middle Third. Lowest extreme temperature of 15°C was recorded in the Eastern Third, and highest extreme temperature of 40°C was recorded over the Middle Third of the country.

Winds were light to moderate in speed throughout the dekad, with highest wind speed of **27km/h** recorded over the Middle and Western Thirds of the country.

Average sunshine recorded during this dekad varied between 6 hours over the Western and Eastern Thirds to 9 hours over the Middle Third of the country.

Minimum Relative Humidity (RH %) recorded across the country was 29% over the Middle Third whereas maximum RH recorded was above 90% across the country.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

The agricultural situation in the country during this dekad did not differ much. Farmers in the eastern parts of the country started sowing. Some crops mainly cereals have germinated. However due to prolong dry spells ranging between four to eight days, some farmers have ceased sowing activities pending the availability of more moisture to continue sowing their crops. In the rest of the country, farmers are still engaged in clearing their farm lands. Vegetable gardening is also ongoing in parts of the Western Third.

Banjul July 12, 2019.

National MWG of The Gambia

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