

Malawi 10-Day Rainfall & Agrometeorological Bulletin

Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services

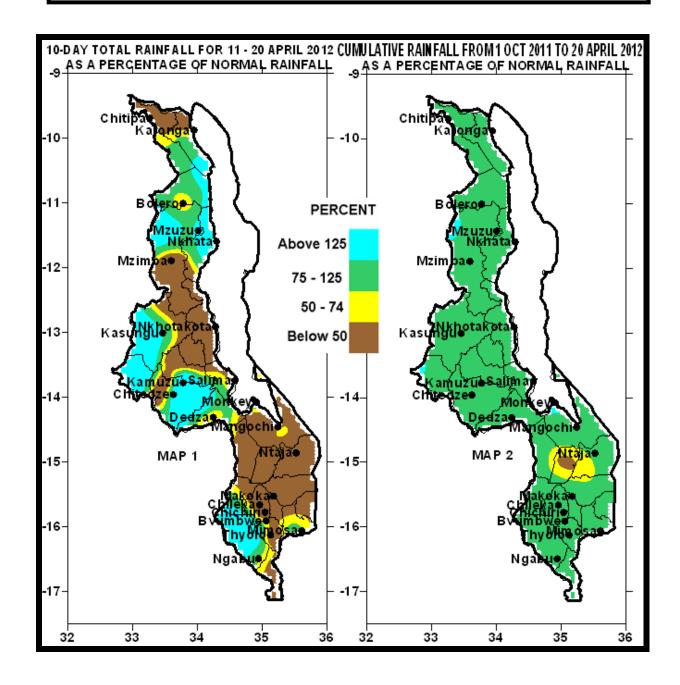


Period: 11 – 20 April 2012 Season: 2011/2012

Release date: 25th April 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

- Moderate to heavy rainfall persisted over highlands and along the lakeshore...
- Harvesting and drying of matured crops were major agricultural activities....
- A further reduction in rainfall expected over Malawi during 21 to 30th April 2012...



1.1 RAINFALL SITUATION

During the second ten days of April 2012, a high pressure area in the Indian Ocean had pushed the main rain belt northwards to the United Republic of Tanzania. As a result substantial rainfall amounts that were much above the long term average were mostly confined to lakeshore areas and a few highlands while dry weather conditions were reported in most areas. Areas that had registered significant cumulative rainfall amounts in excess of 100mm were confined to northern Lakeshore areas including Chintheche Agric (221mm), Nkhata Bay Met at Mkondezi (161mm) and Vinthukutu Agric in Karonga (135mm). More details are on Map 1 and Table 1.

The cumulative rainfall situation showed that most areas in Malawi had received their seasonal average cumulative rainfall amounts (Green Colour on Map 2) and below average rainfall (brown and yellow colour on Map 2) existed around Balaka district in the south. For more details see Map 2 and Table 1.

1.2 MEAN AIR TEMPERATURE

Malawi continued to experience warm to hot weather by day during the second ten days of April 2012. Daily average maximum temperatures ranged from 21°C at Dedza to 30°C at Ngabu in lower Shire. The highest absolute maximum temperature was still recorded at Ngabu (32°C). For more details see Table 2.

1.4 MEAN WIND SPEEDS

Wind speeds at two meters height above the ground level continued to be light. Daily average wind speeds ranged from 0.9 m/s (3.6Km/hr) at Ngabu Meteorological Station to 3.4 m/s (12.2Km/hr) at Salima. More details are in Table 2.

1.5 MEAN RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Fairly moist air had prevailed over most areas in Malawi during the period 11 to 20th April 2012. Daily average relative humidity values were above 70% over most areas of Malawi except at Monkey Bay, Mzimba, Nkhotakota and Salima. The highest average daily relative humidity was reported at Mzuzu Airport (82%). More details are on the Table 2.

2. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Season: 2011/12

Most parts of Malawi started drying up during the period under review as the rainfall season was tailing off. Dry weather had facilitated harvesting and drying of matured crops. On the other hand wet conditions had supported growth development tuber crops, contributed improvement of water resources and soil moisture reserves. The overall seasonal rainfall performance has been generally average. However, southern Malawi expected to experience localized food shortages due to below average crop production as a result of erratic start of main planting rains and prolonged dry spells in February. The other regions are expected to realize average crop yields and production. At national level Malawi is again expected to meet its national food requirement and have some excess from current crop production. Harvesting of matured crop was a major agricultural activity countrywide.

3. PROSPECTS FOR 2011/12 RAINFALL SEASON

The majority of models predict the return of ENSO-neutral conditions beginning April 2012 and continuing up to summer. As a result average rainfall amounts are expected over Malawi between April and June 2012.

As the main rainfall season is tailing off, most parts of Malawi are expected to stay dry. Most of the rains will be confined to lakeshore and over highlands during most of the period April to June 2012.

4. OUTLOOK FOR 21 – 30 APRIL 2012

Short to medium weather forecast products indicate that Malawi will experience incursions of cool and moist air from the Indian Ocean. As a result locally cloudy and cold weather with patches of rain and drizzle are expected over Malawi during the last days of April 2012 as the main summer rainfall season comes to an end.

TABLE 1: DEKADAL RAINFALL SUMMARY FOR 11 – 20 APRIL 2012 AT SELECTED STATIONS

Period: 11 – 20 April 2012

Balaka Township								
SOUTHERN REGION mm mm NORMAL mm mm NORMAL NORMAL Norm NORMAL SO 3 mm mm NORMAL SO 3 mm SO 3 mm NORMAL SO 3 mm SO 3 mm NORMAL SO 3 mm S	STATION NAME	DEKADAL	DEKADAL	DEKADAL	TOTAL	NORMAL	TOTAL	RAINY
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Phalula Agric	Nsanje Boma	0.0	26.2	0	739.2	1048.4	71	0
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TABLE 2: AGROMETEOROLOGICAL PARAMETERS FOR 11 - 20 APRIL 2012

Season: 2011/12

STATION	MAX	MIN	ABS	ABS	WIND	RH
	TEMP	TEMP	MAX	MIN	SPEED	
	(°C)	(°C)	(°C)	(°C)	m/s	%
BOLERO	21.4	13.9	24.6	11.9	2.9	78
BVUMBWE	26.4	16.1	28.8	12.9	N/A	71
CHICHIRI	22.6	14.9	26.4	13.0	1.3	75
CHILEKA	25.1	16.8	27.5	15.0	3.2	70
CHITEDZE	24.8	14.9	27.6	12.3	1.0	72
CHITIPA	25.2	16.6	27.4	14.6	2.6	73
DEDZA	21.4	12.1	24.7	9.9	1.0	79
KIA	24.5	12.2	27.2	9.5	1.7	72
KARONGA	28.3	20.1	31.0	18.8	1.3	75
KASUNGU	26.8	14.2	28.8	11.7	1.1	70
MAKOKA	24.2	14.8	27.5	12.2	2.0	73
MANGOCHI	28.3	19.4	31.9	16.8	1.9	73
MIMOSA	26.1	13.3	29.3	13.1	1.3	78
MONKEY BAY	28.3	19.7	31.5	17.2	2.5	64
MZIMBA	25.5	15.2	27.8	11.6	1.7	68
MZUZU	22.7	15.0	26.0	12.2	1.9	82
NGABU	30.2	16.1	31.8	14.1	0.9	72
NKHATA BAY	27.9	19.2	32.6	16.4	1.1	78
NKHOTAKOTA	26.8	20.2	29.3	18.7	3.1	66
NTAJA	25.8	17.8	28.4	14.6	2.0	72
SALIMA	27.4	20.5	30.5	16.5	3.4	68

Glossary of some terms on this table

- RH = Relative Humidity
- Mean Temperature of the day = (Max of the day + Min of the same day)/2
- ABS Max (Min) = Absolute Maximum (minimum) is the highest (lowest) of maximum (minimum) temperatures observed for a given number of days (calendar month) of a specified period of months (years).
- To convert Meters Per Second (mps) to Kilometers per hour (Km/hr) = mpsx3.6