Malawi 10-Day Rainfall & Agromet Bulletin

Department of Meteorological Services

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HIGHLIGHTS

- **Hot and dry weather continued over Malawi…**
- **Major on-farm agricultural activity has been land preparation …**
- **Mainly sunny and hot to very hot weather expected to continue …**

1.1 RAINFALL SITUATION

Mainly hot and dry weather prevailed over Malawi except at a few places where sporadic and mostly below average rainfall amounts were experienced in the first ten days of October 2008. Such places included Mzimba Met (20.9mm), Bolero Met (2.8mm), Mimosa Met (2.8mm), Satemwa Tea Estate (0.6mm), Balaka Township (0.4mm) and Bvumbwe Met (0.3mm). Mainly hot and dry weather is likely to persist over Malawi in the month of October until major rain bearing systems get established over the country, normally between November and December.

1.2 MEAN AIR TEMPERATURE

Mean maximum air temperatures were generally hot.except in lower Shire Valley where Ngabu reported an average maximum temperatures of 38°C. Overall, average maximum temperatures ranged from 26°C at Dedza to 38°C at Ngabu while average lowest temperatures ranged from 14°C at Mzuzu to 23°C at Ngabu. For more details see Table 1 below.

1.4 MEAN WIND SPEEDS

Mean Wind speeds at a height of two metres above the ground level ranged from 1.0 and 4.6 metres per second or 3.6 – 16.6 Km/hr (see table). The highest wind speeds were reported at Chitipa (4.6 m/s).

1.5 MEAN RELATIVE HUMIDITY

During the first ten days of October 2008, air over Malawi was fairly dry. Daily average relative humidity values ranged from 43% at Chileka to 54% at Mkondezi in Nkhata Bay. Details are on the Table 1 on page 2.

2.AGROMETEOROLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

During the period under review the main on-farm agricultural activity in Malawi has been land preparation in readiness for the coming main rains.

3. PROSPECTS OF 2008/09 RAINFALL SEASON

The climate models indicate that during the period October to December 2008, the northern half of Malawi has 40% chance of rainfall total being normal, 35% chance of being below normal and 25% chance of being above normal while the Southern half has 40% chance of rainfall total being normal, 35% chance of being above normal and 25% chance of being below normal. During the period January to March 2009 Malawi as a whole has 40% chance of rainfall total being normal, 35% chance of being above normal and 25% chance of being below normal.

In summary, the models suggest that during 2008/2009 rainfall season, a greater part of Malawi will experience normal total rainfall amounts. However, just like in any ENSO-neutral season, extreme weather events like floods and prolonged dry spells may occur in some places.

4.OUTLOOK 11 – 20 OCTOBER 2008

Mostly sunny and hot to locally very hot weather is expected to continue over Malawi during 11 - 20 October 2008

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TABLE 1: AGROMETEOROLOGICAL PARAMETERS FOR 1 – 10 OCTOBER 2008

STATION	MAX TEMP (°C)	MIN TEMP (°C)	ABS MAX (°C)	ABS MIN (°C)	WIND SPEED m/s	RH %
BVUMBWE	29.4	17.1	32.2	12.5	2.5	52
BOLERO	31.3	16.7	35.1	13.0	1.2	45
CHICHIRI	30.4	18.1	34.0	13.5	1.1	47
CHILEKA	32.9	20.5	36.1	16.0	4.0	43
NTAJA	33.0	20.1	35.6	17.0	2.7	44
CHITEDZE	31.1	18.9	33.9	12.9	1.4	44
CHITIPA	30.1	17.9	33.1	15.1	4.6	45
DEDZA	25.6	16.1	28.9	12.9	1.9	47
KASUNGU	N/A	16.3	N/A	8.6	3.1	51
KARONGA	33.1	21.6	35.0	20.5	2.0	51
K I A	29.9	16.3	33.9	12.1	2.4	44
MAKOKA	30.6	17.6	33.0	12.8	2.0	47
MANGOCHI	34.6	20.9	37.0	18.4	2.4	44
MIMOSA	34.2	19.8	37.0	13.5	1.7	49
MONKEY BAY	33.9	21.5	36.0	20.0	2.6	48
MZIMBA	29.1	17.6	32.2	14.5	1.6	49
MZUZU	27.5	14.0	31.0	10.6	2.2	53
NGABU	38.3	22.9	42.3	18.6	3.4	45
NKHATA BAY	33.5	15.9	35.1	14.2	1.0	54
NKHOTAKOTA	32.0	20.5	34.1	18.9	1.0	52
SALIMA	33.2	20.8	35.3	19.0	2.9	45

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