NATIONAL METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES AGENCY
TEN DAY AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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SUMMARY

During the first dekad of July 2004, the observed normal to above normal rainfall over most parts of western Tigray, Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, parts of western Oromiya, Gambela and northwestern SNNPR favoured season's agricultural activities while the reverse was true in some areas eastern Tigray, Amhara and eastern Oromiya including most parts of SNNPR. For instance, Kombolcha, Mieso and Dolomena reported slight wilting and partial drying on sorghum and maize fields due to water stress. On the contrary, some areas of western Amhara, western and central Oromiya including central Tigray and northern Benishangul Gumuz received heavy falls ranging from 30 – 74 mm.

During the Second dekad of July 2004, the observed normal to above normal rainfall over most parts of Kiremt benefiting areas favored season's agricultural activities. As a result the general field condition of the crop was in a good shape in most parts of the reporting stations. Moreover, sowing of wheat, teff and pulse crops was underway in some areas of central and western Oromiya, northern SNNPR and eastern Amhara. However some pocket areas of western and eastern lowlands were still under deficient condition. On the other hand some areas of central, eastern and southern highlands exhibited falls greater than 30 mm. For instance Bahir Dar, Senkata, Debre Markos, Kachisie, Debre Birhan, Wegel Tena, Limu Genet and Kombolcha recorded 95.5, 68.2, 58.3, 55.7, 45.6, 44.6, 42.6 and 40.6 mm of heavy fall in one rainy day, respectively. As a result some pocket areas of central and southern highlands of Ethiopia reported crop damage due to water logging.

In accordance with the crop phenological report sowing of pulses and cereal crops like teff, wheat and maize was under way in Wgel Tena, Shambu, Ziway, Soddo, Amba Mariam and Cheffa. On the contrary maize was being harvested and teff was at ripeness stage in some areas of southern highlands of Oromiya. The recently sown wheat and barley crops were at early vegetative stage in some areas of western and central Oromiya (Shambu, Fiche, Kulumsa and Meraro) including eastern and western Amhara (Wegel Tena, Lalibela, Were Illu and Dangila). Maize was at ninth leaf and teaselling stages in western, central and eastern Oromiya while at emergence stage in some areas of western Amhara like Dangila. Sorghum was at shooting and tillering stages in western Oromiya (Nedjo, Algie, Gimbi and Aira). Pulse crops were at budding in some areas of central Oromiya where as at emergence stage in some areas of eastern Amhara like Were Illu Amba Mariam. Oil crops like Nug and Flax were at early vegetative stage in central Oromiya like Kachise, Woliso and Meraro including some areas of western Amhara like Bullen. Kombolcha reported slight crop damage due to diseases. Bui reported severe water logging on sorghum field.

1. WEATHER ASSESSMENT

1.1 RAINFALL AMOUNT (Fig. 1)

Debre Birhan, Debre Markas, Kachesei, Cheffa, Lalibella, Debre Tabor, Kombolcha, Mehal Meda, Dangila, Debre Markos, Limu Genet, Bui, Fitch, Ejaji, Majete, Enewary, Jimma, Amba Mariam, Michew and Nekemte received 166.8, 148, 146.5, 142.7, 140.2, 139.8, 137.8, 134.4, 131.3, 128.3, 126.6, 123.6, 123.3, 122.2, 121.5, 118.7, 115.3, 112.4, 110.7 and 103.7 mm of dekadal rainfall, respectively

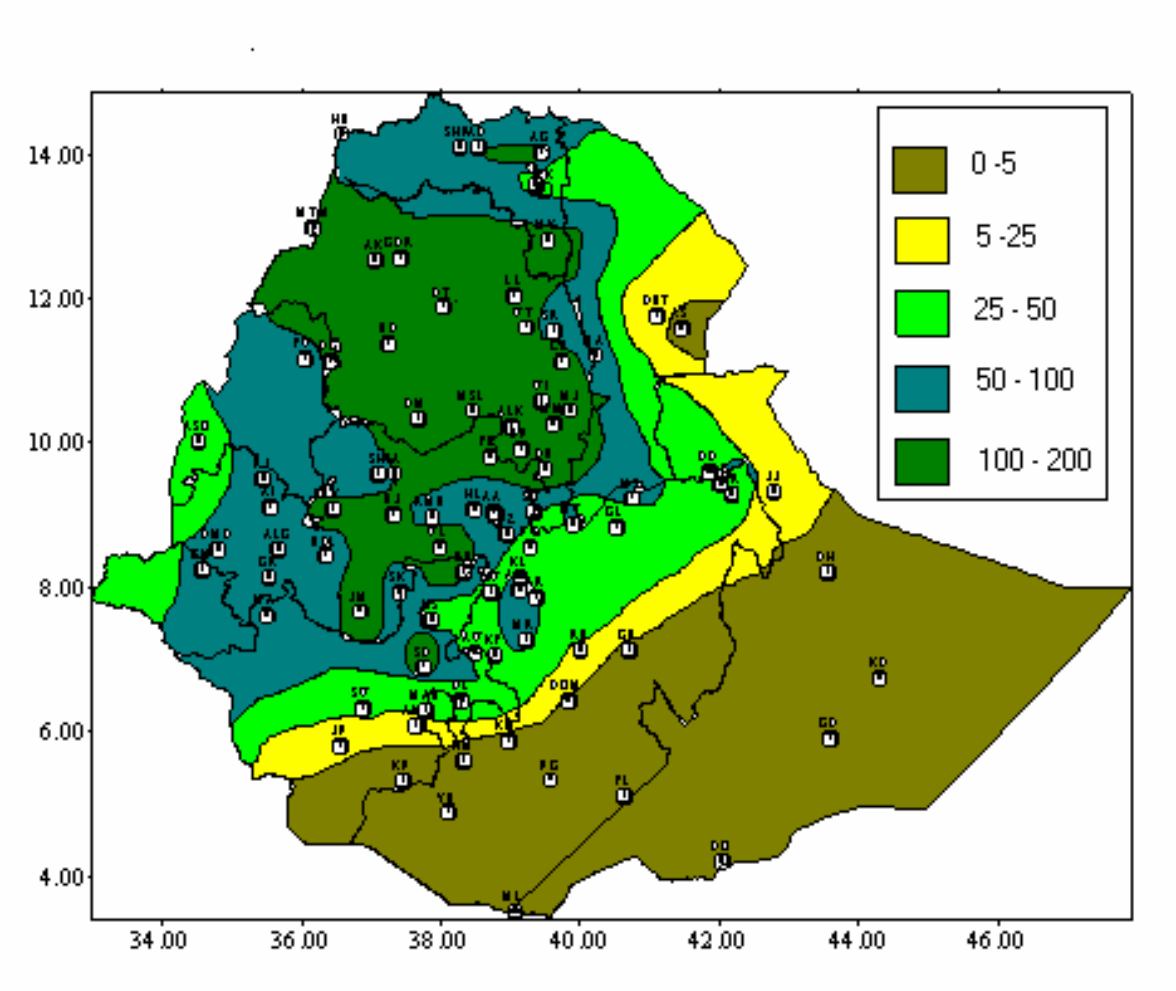

Fig 1. Rainfall distribution in mm (11-20, July 2004)

1.2 RAINFALL ANOMALY (Fig. 2)

Amhara, northern parts of Benishangul-Gumuz, northern and eastern SNNPR, northern Gambela, parts of western and central as well as pocket areas of eastern Oromiya, pocket areas of northern Somali and parts of northern Tigray experienced normal to above normal rainfall distribution while the rest of the country received below normal rainfall.

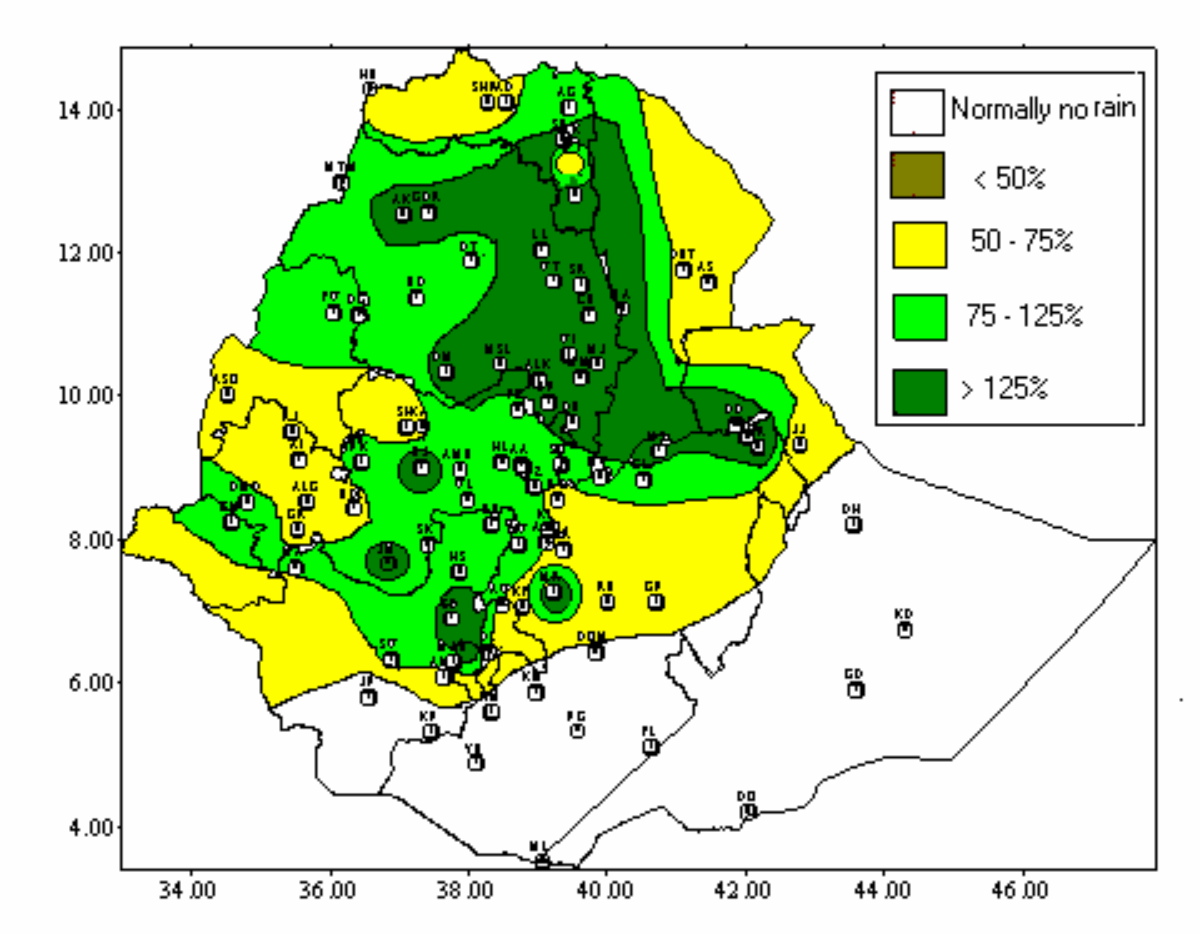

Fig.2 Percent of normal rainfall (11-20, July 2004)

Explanatory notes for the legend:
<50 -- Much below normal
50—75% -- below normal
75—125% --- Normal
> 125% ---- Above normal

1.3 TEMPERATURE ANOMALY

There were no significant minimum or maximum temperature anomalies during the dekad under review.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR THE THIRD DEKAD OF JULY 2004

In the coming ten days, the Kiremit rain-bearing systems are anticipated to well establish across the nation. Hence, much of Benishangul-Gumuz, Tigray and Amhara as well as western and central Oromiya will receive normal to above normal rains. Particularly, heavy rain showers are highly likely to occur over localized portions of the aforementioned regions. On the other hand, Gambala, SNNPR, eastern Oromiya, Afar, and the adjoining portion of eastern Tigray and Amhara, and northern Somali are expected to get near normal rains with a probability of getting below normal rains over some places. Nevertheless, southern and southeastern lowlands will experience dry weather condition.

3. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

3.1 VEGETATION CONDITION AND IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

Generally, the observed widespread rainfall distribution over much of Meher benefiting favored season's agricultural activities. As a result the general field condition of the crop was in a good shape in most parts of the reporting stations. Moreover, sowing of wheat, teff and pulse crops was underway in some areas of central and western Oromiya, northern SNNPR and eastern Amhara. However some pocket areas of western and eastern lowlands were still under deficient condition. On the other hand some areas of central, eastern and southern highlands exhibited falls greater than 30 mm. For instance Bahir Dar, Senkata, Debre Markos, Kachisie, Debre Birhan, Wegel Tena, Limu Genet and Kombolcha recorded 95.5, 68.2, 58.3, 55.7, 45.6, 44.6, 42.6 and 40.6 mm of heavy fall in one rainy day, respectively. As a result some pocket areas of central and southern highlands of Ethiopia reported crop damage due to water logging.

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3.2 EXPECTED WEATHER IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE DURING THE COMING DAKAD

The anticipated improved rainfall situation over most parts of Kiremt rain benefiting areas would ease the persisted dry spell in some area of eastern half of the country. Hence the expected normal to above normal rainfall over Tigray, Amhara, Benishangul, western and central Oromiya, Addis Ababa, northern half of SNNPR and Gambela will have indispensable contribution for the general Meher agricultural activities. However, the anticipated occasional heavy falls over some places of aforementioned areas may cause flood and water logging on crops field in low lying areas as well as in areas where the soil type is clay, hence precaution needs ahead of the time in order to minimize such adverse condition. The expected near normal rainfall distribution over Tigray and the adjoining areas of eastern Amhara, southern Afar, northern Somali, Hrari, Dire Dawa and most parts of eastern Oromiya will alleviate the persisted moisture deficit and help for land preparation and sowing of cereals over the aforementioned cropping areas. More over, the anticipated near normal rainfall distribution over southern Afar and northern Somali will have positive impact for the availability of pasture and drinking water.