

A recent forecast issued by the Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF50), issued on 28 August 2018, indicates a greater likelihood of normal to above normal 2018 Deyr (October-December) rains across Somalia. Specifically, the forecast indicates 35 percent probability of above normal rainfall in the northwest regions. This probability is higher (40%) in the rest of the country (Figure 1). Overall, probabilities of normal to above normal rainfall are 75 percent across the country.

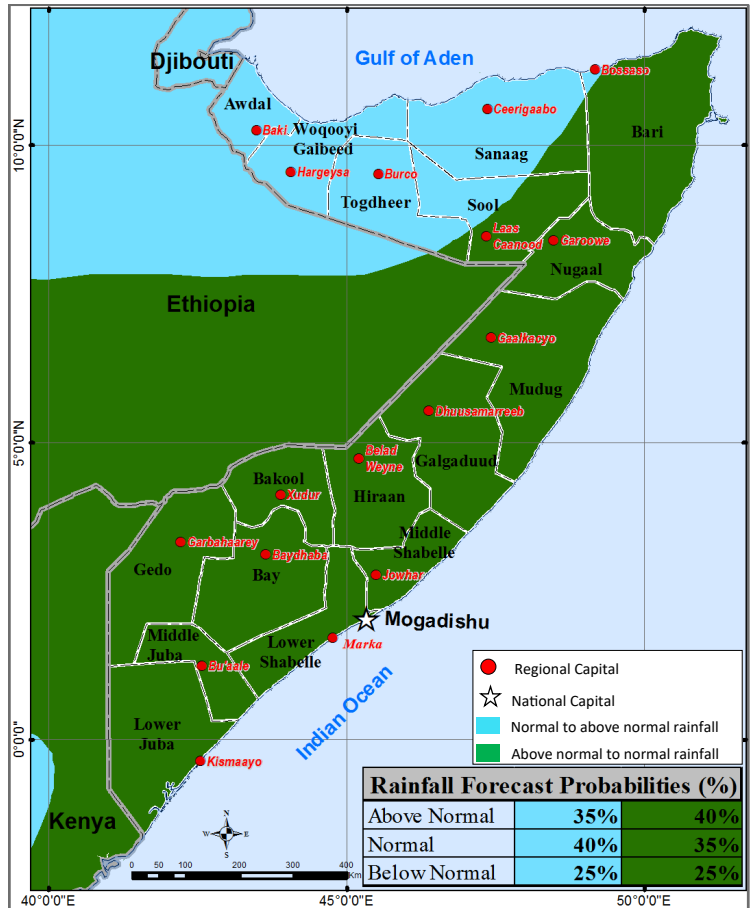
According to the information from GHACOF50, the 2018 Deyr season is expected to start earlier than normal with normal cessation in many parts of the Somalia but an early cessation is likely in the northwest regions of the country. There is also an increased likelihood of warmer than normal average temperatures across Somalia.

The anticipated average to above average Deyr rains are expected to further enhance pasture and water availability for livestock, improve livestock body condition and reproduction and facilitate increased crop cultivation in crop growing areas of Somalia.

On the downside, normal to above normal rainfall is also likely in parts of the Ethiopian highlands which contribute significantly to the flow into the two main rivers in Somalia (Juba and Shabelle). As a result, there will be an increased risk of flooding along Juba and Shabelle rivers.

Low lying areas of Galgaduud, Mudug, parts of Nugaal and other regions may experience flash floods during the forthcoming Deyr season due to the forecast heavy rains.

Figure 1: GHACOF50 Rainfall Outlook for October to December 2018



Expected Impacts

1. Agriculture and Livestock

Enhanced rainfall during the 2018 Deyr is expected to improve soil moisture, thereby creating opportunities to maximise both area cultivated under crops and boost crop yields and agricultural employment in crop dependent areas of the country.

The anticipated average to above average Deyr rains are expected to further enhance pasture and water availability for livestock and improve livestock body condition and reproduction.

2. Environment

It is advisable to put in place soil conservation measures to minimize environmental degradation caused by soil and gully erosion. Local communities should also be encouraged to plant more indigenous trees as well as fodder for livestock in order to increase vegetation and tree cover.

3. Disaster Management

With heavy rains foreseen within the Juba and Shabelle river basins both in Somalia and adjacent areas in the Ethiopian highlands, river flooding is likely due to weak and open river embankments. There are several open riverbanks that pose danger even under conditions of normal rainfall. Flash floods can also be expected in flood-prone, low-lying areas.

Government, local authorities, riverine communities and partners are advised to take flood-risk mitigation measures by closing open river embankments before the start of the rains in October.

4. Water Resources

Water availability, both for livestock and human consumption, is expected to improve as a result of the forecast average to above average Deyr rains. This creates opportunities for water harvesting and conservation for future use by local communities. In this regard, communities are encouraged to increase water harvesting and conservation measures with the support of local authorities, government and partners.