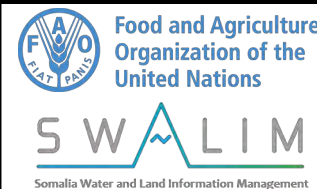


Somalia Rainfall Outlook for Gu 2018

Issued: 15 February 2018



Normal to below normal rains expected in most parts of Somalia during the Gu 2018 season

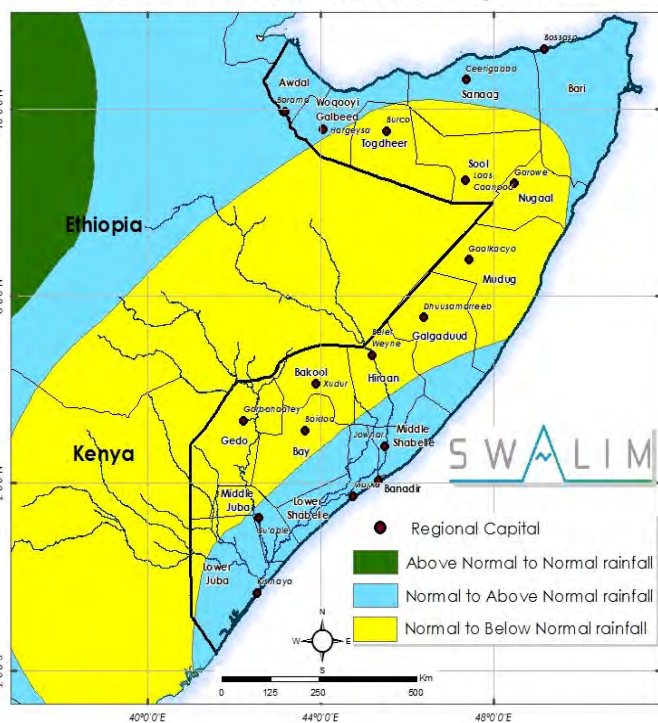
The Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF) has confirmed a reduction of the chances of experiencing a La Nina event during the March to May rainy season. During the recent GHACOF, the March to May 2018 rainfall forecast for the region was released. According to the forecast, Gu 2018 season in Somalia is expected to be normal (40% probability of normal rains) with a tendency of 35 % probability of below normal rains in most parts of the country. This also includes part of the Ethiopian highlands which contribute significantly to both Juba and Shabelle river flow inside Somalia and all inland parts of the country. Further, Awdal , northern parts of Sanaag and Bari regions in the north as well as the southern coastal regions of Lower Juba and Lower Shabelle are expected to experience normal rains (40% probability of normal rains) with a tendency of 35% above normal rains as seen in Figure 1.

The expected depressed rains in many parts of the country will only exacerbate the existing drought conditions. Togdheer, Sool , Nugal and Mudug regions will be worst affected owing to the prevailing drought conditions. Gedo, Bakool, Hiraan and parts of Bay will also be affected adversely by the below normal rains.

This outlook is a consensus forecast designed for a regional audience that addresses the rainfall totals summed over the three-month period from March to May 2018. However, SWALIM and other technical partners will keep updating this forecast for shorter lead time periods and will share with you through the regular bulletins throughout the rainfall season.

Figure 1: Rainfall Outlook for March to May 2018

Rainfall Outlook for March to May 2018



Given the existing conditions and the rainfall forecast, problems related to water scarcity are likely to persist especially in the northern parts of the country where the previous four rainy seasons were below normal. There is also potential for human-livestock conflicts over limited water resources in these areas. Close monitoring of the situation and contingency measures are necessary in order to adequately cope with the situation. Flash floods cannot be ruled out as well as river line flooding due to weak river embankments and artificial river bank breakages for irrigation purposes.

Increased water supply is expected in areas where normal rains will be experienced. In such cases, communities should take advantage of the rains to harvest rain-water using simple technologies for future use. On the other hand, in case of depressed rains replenishing of the surface water points may be minimal and therefore communities should use the available resources sparingly.



Expected Start and Cessation of Gu 2018 Season

Somalia has two distinct rainy seasons, *Gu* and *Deyr*, with varied timings across the country. The first main rainy season (*Gu*) occurs in the period between March and June and the second (*Deyr*) from October to November. The *Gu* season dominates over the *Deyr* in quantity and reliability of rainfall and is thus the primary cropping season. The *Gu* 2018 rainy season is expected to start in mid March in the southern parts and isolated pockets in the north (Figure 2). The rain will then spread further north between March and April with a late start of season expected in larger areas of the northern regions during the last week of April. The rainy season will generally end during the last week of May (Figure 3) thus exposing the northern areas to a shorter period of wetness than normal.

Figure 2: Expected start of the Gu 2018 season

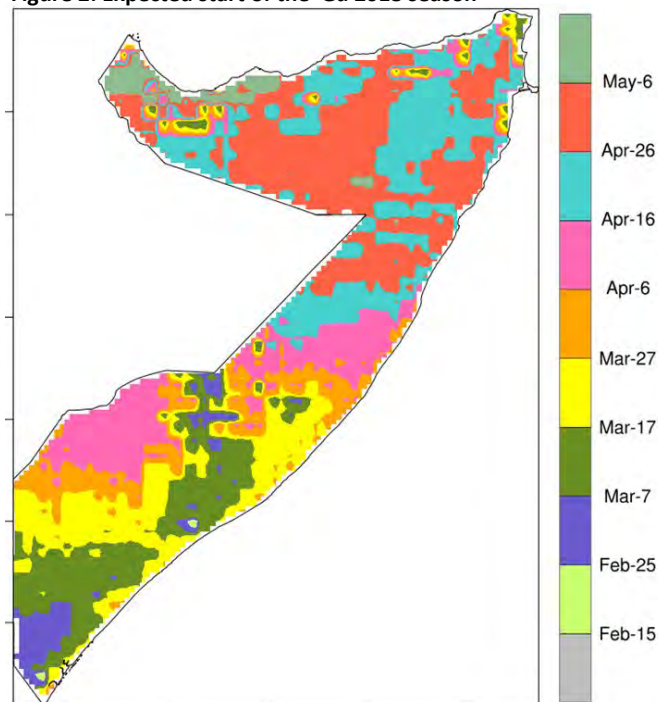
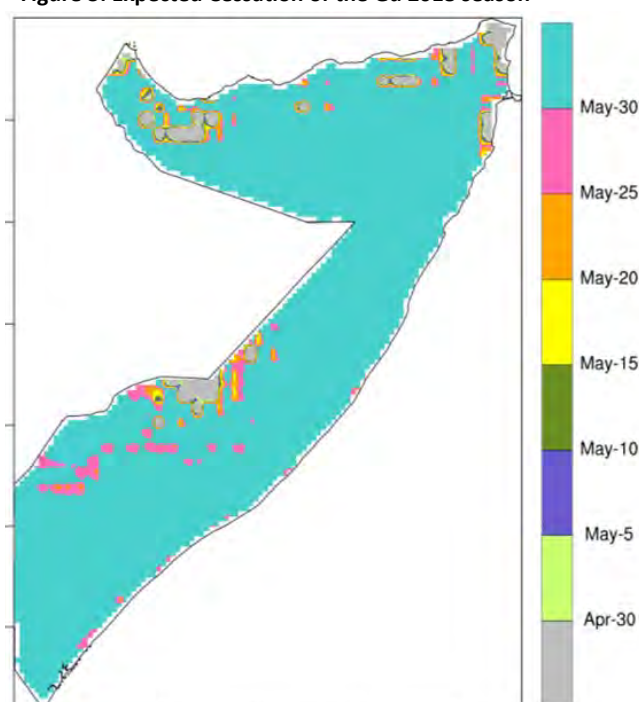


Figure 3: Expected Cessation of the Gu 2018 season



Expected impacts of the rainfall outlook for different sectors

1. Agriculture, Food Security and Livestock

Below normal rains will interfere with agricultural activities negatively. Foliage and pasture conditions in the pastoral areas are expected to improve with the onset of the rains but deplete quickly as a result of depressed rains which may not sustain them for long.

2. Water Resources

With low rains expected in the upper reaches of the Juba and Shabelle basins, it is foreseen that the river flows may not be adequate to sustain the various sectors over the next dry season (June to October 2018). Communities should take advantage of any rains and harvest rain-water for future use. On the other hand, in case of depressed rains, replenishment of the surface water points may be minimal and therefore communities should use the available resources sparingly. Riverine flooding cannot however be ruled out during this season due to existing open and weak river embankments.

3. Disaster Management

Problems related to water scarcity are likely to occur in the pastoral areas especially in the northern parts of the country where the previous *Deyr* rainy season was below normal. There is also potential for human-livestock conflicts over limited water resources in these areas. Close monitoring of the situation and contingency measures are necessary in order to adequately cope with the situation.

4. Health

Diseases associated with water scarcity and poor sanitation such as typhoid and cholera may emerge in various parts of the country that are expected to receive depressed rainfall.