



FOOD SECURITY EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

Agromet-Update

2005/2006 Agricultural Season

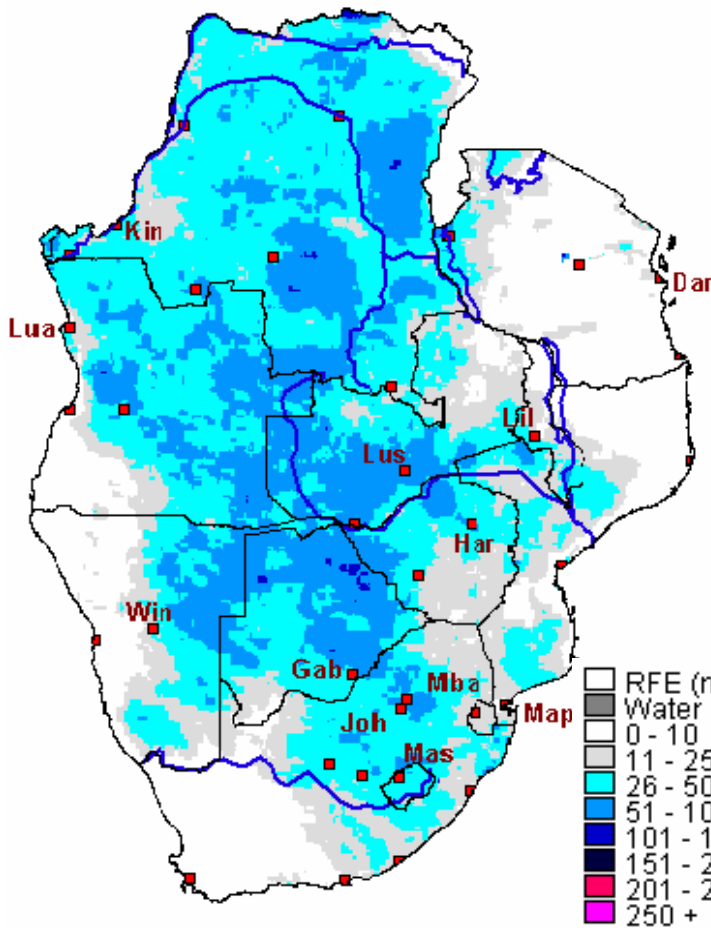


Issue 02 Dekad: 03 Month: November Season: 2005-2006 Release date: 06-12-2005

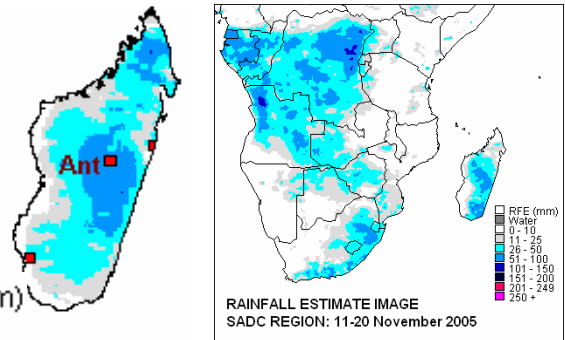
Highlights

- ❑ High rainfall received in most parts of the region...
- ❑ Land preparation and sowing continues...
- ❑ Tanzania experience dry conditions...
- ❑ Malawi still awaits sufficient rainfall for full scale sowing...

Fig.1. Rainfall Performance for Dekad 3 of November 2005



The third dekad of November 2005 received a substantial amount of rainfall compared to the previous dekad (see inserted image below). The satellite imagery (figure 1) indicates that most of the rainfall was experienced in the central parts of the region covering Angola, Botswana, the DRC, South Africa, Lesotho, Zambia and parts of Namibia and Zimbabwe as well as Madagascar. The rest of the region had very low rainfall and in most cases no rainfall. The areas with low to no rainfall covered most of Malawi, Mozambique Swaziland and Tanzania. Most of Tanzania has been dry for the last two dekads of November. So far, the productive areas of Botswana have received good rainfall for agricultural activity.



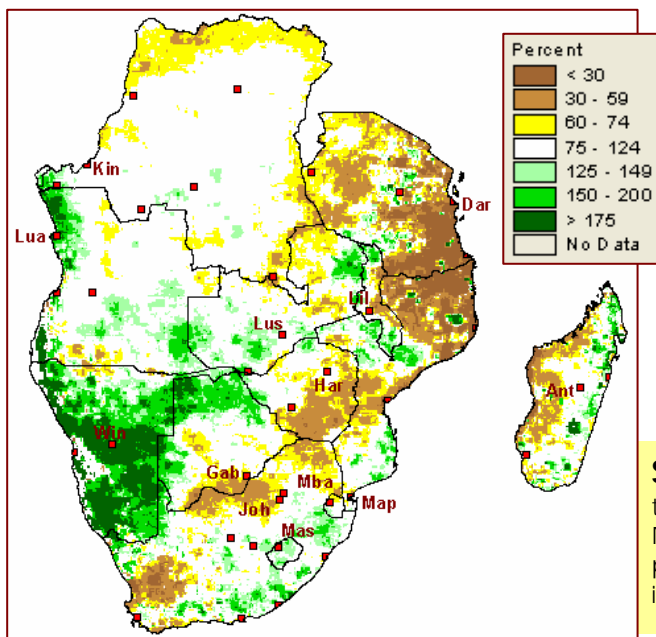
Analysis from the beginning of November 2005 indicates that there is improvement in rainfall amounts and also that the rainfall is covering more areas in the southern parts of the region. This is the normal pattern of rainfall. The performance of rainfall in December will be critical for the agricultural season.

This 10-Day Agromet Update is a product of the Regional Remote Sensing Unit (RRSU) in the SADC FANR, in collaboration with the USAID FEWSNET Project. Ground information used is obtained from the National Early Warning Systems in the SADC Member States



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PERCENT RAINFALL RECEIVED FROM SEPTEMBER to NOVEMBER 2005

The SADC region has received varying amounts of rainfall in comparison to what would have been received normally. The western half has received more than 100% of what they would normally receive by the end of November. Areas to note are most of Namibia, northern Botswana and parts of Angola. The eastern half is showing deficit especially parts of Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The western parts of Madagascar have also received less than normal. Areas of concern include bi-modal areas of Tanzania, central Malawi and central and southern Zimbabwe. The season in northern Mozambique normally commences in December and hence does not cause much concern right now.

SWAZILAND The country enjoyed good rainfall in the first two dekads but not in the third dekad of November. However, the agricultural season is progressing well with sowing taking place. Livestock is also doing well with improved pastures.

SEED AVAILABILITY VS RAINFALL PERFORMANCE

The dominant staple food crop in the SADC region is maize although communities also consume cassava, millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes among others. Therefore, the availability of timely seed becomes critical for an improved agricultural season considering the poor performance of the 2004-05 season. The SADC Seed Security Network indicates that some countries have seed deficits while other have surplus. Seed maize surplus countries include; Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia. Deficit countries include; Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. The availability of seed should be related to the performance of the rainfall as this will provide a guide as to which areas are likely to have poor agricultural performance resulting in prolonged food insecurity.

Dominant Situation in SADC The situation generally in the SADC region continues to progress with many more countries receiving substantial amounts of rainfall. At the same time, acquisition of agricultural inputs is taking place. Close monitoring is being undertaken in the emergency countries which include; Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

ZIMBABWE The rainfall received has continued to improve although Masvingo and Manicaland have received less than 60% of normal rainfall. With deficit maize seed, importing of seed should have been completed by now to meet the demand.

MALAWI The country experienced a poor season in 2004-05 and it is important that agricultural production improves to contribute towards food security. In the dekad being reported, moderate to heavy rainfall that fell over the south and parts of central improved soil moisture reserves which facilitated land preparation and planting of crops. In some areas particularly in the south where sufficient rains for planting of crops started in the first and second ten-days of November, the rains supported germination of seeds, application of basal dressing fertiliser, crop growth and development.

ZAMBIA The country received high amounts of rainfall especially in the western half including the drought prone southern province. Land preparation and sowing continues to be the main activities.

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