



South Sudan's rainy season kicks off with above-average rainfall in most areas, favouring farmers and pastoralists in the Greater Equatoria, but also increasing the risk of flash floods in low-lying areas that are experiencing excessive rainfall.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The rainy season in South Sudan continues to progress, following seasonal patterns and with most areas recording normal to above-normal rainfall. Areas that have experienced well above-normal rainfall since the season began include Western Equatoria State, Central Equatoria State, Lakes State, and the eastern parts of Eastern Equatoria State (see the downloads in page 2).
- Satellite-derived rainfall estimates show that from the start of the year to the 1st Dekad of May 2020, the highest amounts of cumulative rainfall have been experienced in Western Equatoria State (619 mm), Central Equatoria State (511 mm) and Eastern Equatoria State (480 mm).
- The states with the highest amounts of rainfall in the 1st Dekad of May 2020 (Figure 1) are Western Equatoria State (130 mm – Figure 3), Central Equatoria State (109 mm) and Lakes State (105 mm).
- In the 1st Dekad (1-10) of May 2020, many areas across the country have experienced rainfall estimated at more than 80 percent compared to the long-term average (see the dark blue areas in Figure 2). However, in actual estimated amounts, it ranges from a low of 19 mm of rainfall in Upper Nile State to a high of 130 mm of rainfall in Western Equatoria State.
- There is a high risk of flash floods in low-lying areas that are experiencing localized, high intensity rainfall. For example, some areas in Juba of Central Equatoria State have reported flash floods during periods of heavy rainfall that led to oversaturation of soils with water.
- Heavy rains in the neighbouring countries, particularly Uganda and Ethiopia have resulted in flooding cases which have led to displacement, and loss of assets and lives. Lake Victoria is reported to have reached unprecedented water levels which have displaced shoreline communities and also caused erosion and flooding along the River Nile. There is need to closely monitor the River Nile's water levels to ensure communities living along it in South Sudan are warned about the risk of flooding.

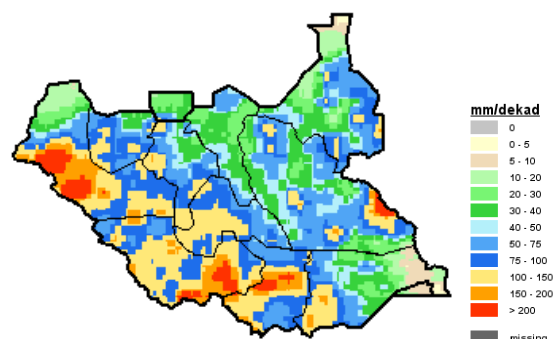


Figure 1 - Estimated Precipitation, Dekad 1, May 2020 (Source: FAO GIEWS)

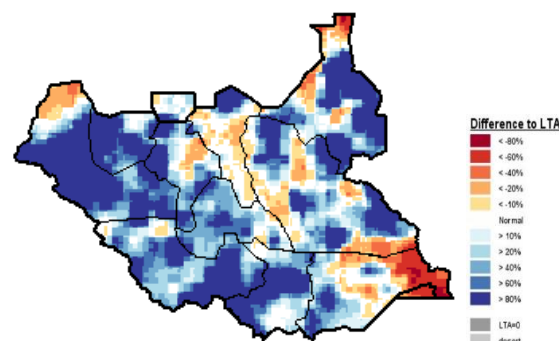


Figure 2 - Estimated Precipitation Anomaly, Dekad 1, May 2020 (Source: FAO GIEWS)

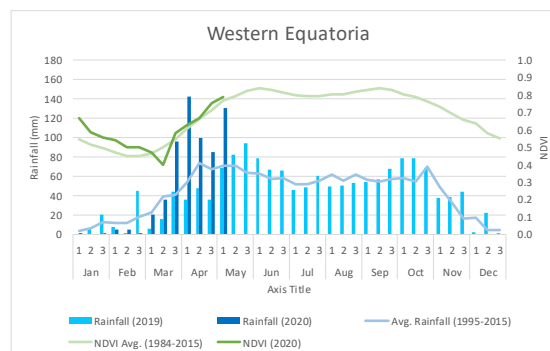


Figure 3 – Rainfall and NDVI trends for Western Equatoria State, Year 2020 (Source: FAO GIEWS)

SEASONAL FORECAST

The [GHACOF 55 rainfall forecast for June to September 2020](#) (Figure 4) predicts that a wetter than usual rainy season is expected in southeastern South Sudan, with the rest of the country likely experiencing normal to above-normal rainfall. The same report forecasts a likelihood of a warmer than usual season for the western parts of South Sudan, while the eastern parts are likely to experience colder than usual temperatures (Figure 5).

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SEASON'S PROGRESSION

- The prevailing rainfall conditions are conducive for farmers and pastoralists because there is adequate soil moisture to support crop and pasture growth.
- These above-normal rainfall conditions are anticipated to wash away both larvae of the Fall Armyworm in the Greater Equatoria and eggs laid by desert locusts in parts of Eastern Equatoria State. This could partially mitigate the extent of crop and vegetation destruction by the two pests.
- There are risks of flooding as some of the decadal readings from FAO's rain gauge network indicate higher localized rainfall (when compared to the state-level estimates).

SEASONAL PROGRESSION AND COVID-19

- The seasonal deterioration of the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions during the rainy season is expected to lead to an increase of water-borne diseases, compromising the immunity of the affected communities and making them vulnerable to COVID-19.
- The deterioration of infrastructure such as roads and airstrips will make COVID-19 related medical evacuations difficult, endangering the lives of those affected by the virus in locations with limited health facilities.
- Flooding and associated displacement would create living conditions where over-crowding is widespread and adherence to social-distancing measures is difficult. If a case of COVID-19 is reported in such a community, the virus is likely to spread through the community very fast and overwhelm the existing health facilities.

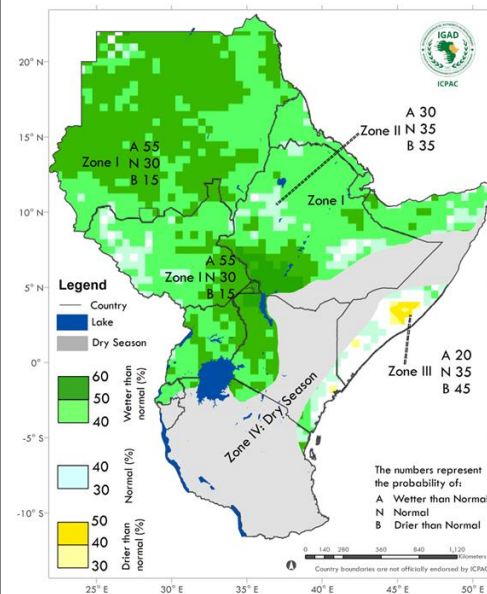


Figure 4 – GHACOF 55 rainfall outlook for June to September 2020 (Source: ICPAC)

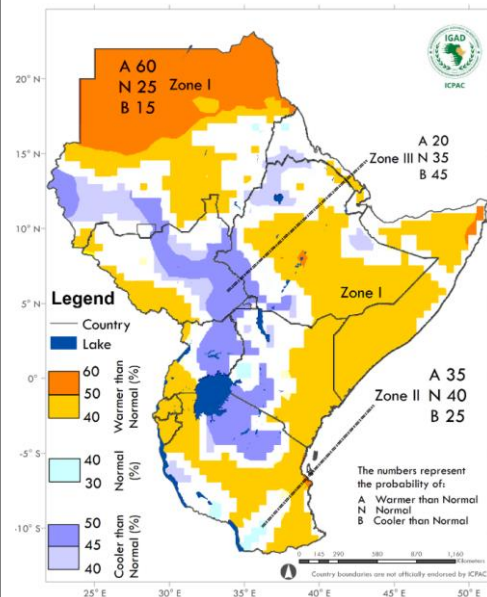


Figure 5 – GHACOF 55 temperature outlook for June to September 2020 (Source: ICPAC)

DOWNLOADS

- [2020 Dekadal seasonal progression \(PDF, 1.24MB\)](#)
- [2020 Rainfall \(current and long-term average\) & NDVI Graphs and data \(MS Excel, 123KB\)](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- With the onset of the rainy season and COVID-19 related movement restrictions, the safe distribution of agricultural inputs should be hastened to ensure that farmers take advantage of the favourable farming conditions.
- FAO, in collaboration with the High Level Committee (HLC) on Desert Locust chaired by the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), as well as the Technical Committee chaired by the Director General - Plant Protection, MAFS, should strengthen surveillance and control measures to mitigate the loss of crops and pasture to desert locusts. This is in light of the latest forecast (*Figure 6*) which shows that the desert locusts will migrate through South Sudan's states of Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity on their way to West Africa via Sudan.
- Continue to support and enhance livestock diseases surveillance systems for early detection, identification and reporting on animal health risks for timely intervention. Vaccination campaigns should also be carried out against deadly diseases during this period of the season to minimize livestock loss.

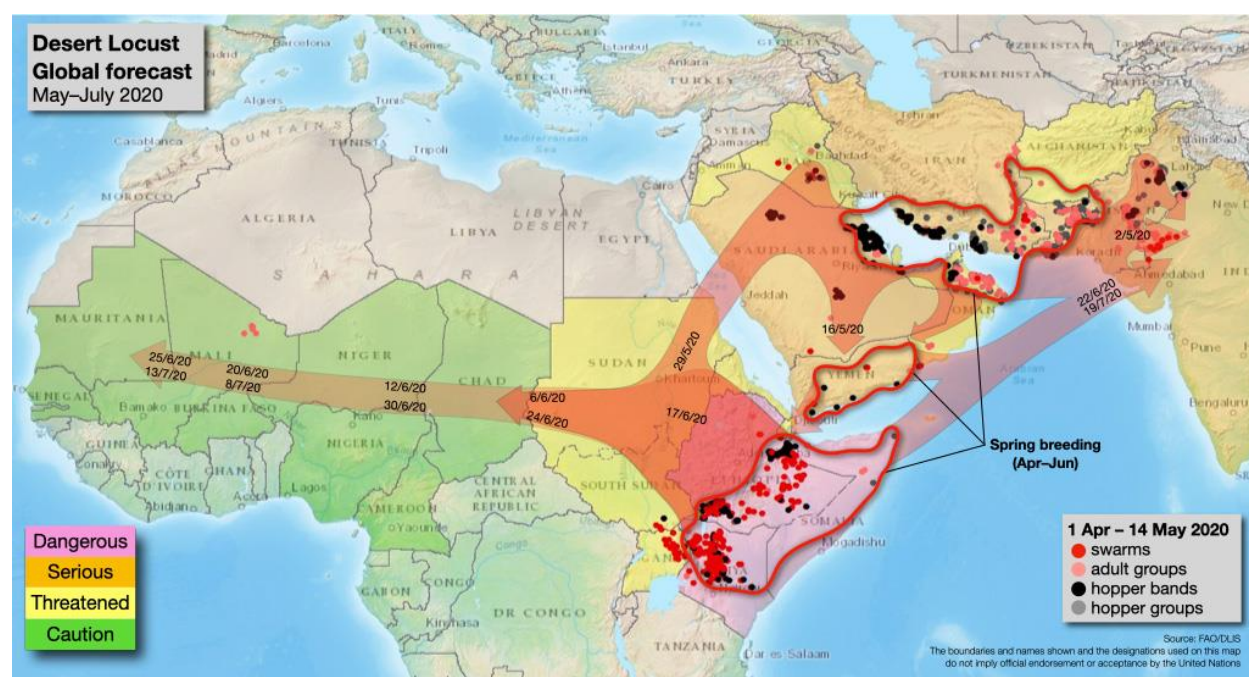


Figure 5 – Desert locust global forecast and migration route (Source: FAO/DLIS)



This report is produced by FAO South Sudan's project (*Strengthening the Livelihoods of Pastoral and Agropastoral Communities in South Sudan's Cross-border Areas with Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda*) which is funded by the European Union.

Project Website: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/south-sudan-cross-border-project/en/>

CLIMIS Portal: <http://www.climis-southsudan.org>

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