MARS-FOOD SEC
Crop Monitoring for Food Security

Crop monitoring in Somalia
October 2008

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Good start of the Deyr crop season in South and Central Somalia

The Deyr crop season has started normally or slightly early throughout the rainfed agricultural regions of Southern Somalia and large parts of the region appear clearly greener than usual on satellite imagery. Contrarily to the rainfed areas, in Lower Shabelle this exceptional greenness is not linked to the start of the Deyr season but rather due to an abnormally late crop cycle after the bad start of the first 2008 rainy season.

In the North Western part of the country the long rains (Aug. – Oct.) have been close to average, as confirmed by 3 rainfall gauges monitored by the SWALIM project in this region.

Pastoral regions in central Somalia which had been hit by a long and continuous drought from the second part of 2007 are now recovering, but good rainfall in November and December will be important to confirm this trend. ■

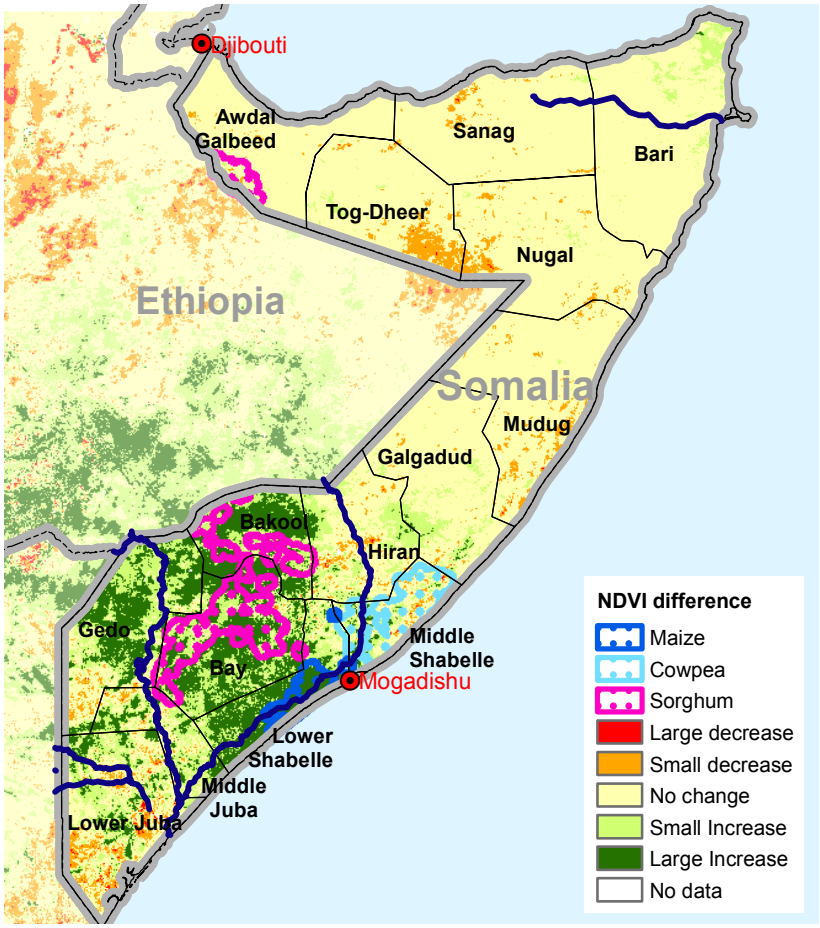

Figure 1. **NDVI Monthly difference with the long term average (1999-2007).**

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Rainfall analysis

Deyr rainfall has started as expected at the beginning/mid October and is close to average in large parts of Southern Somalia. Below average situations are visible in the northern pastoral areas such as Nugal and parts of Togdheer, while isolated raingauge data from these regions (Hargeisha and Qardo) have recorded close to average rainfall.

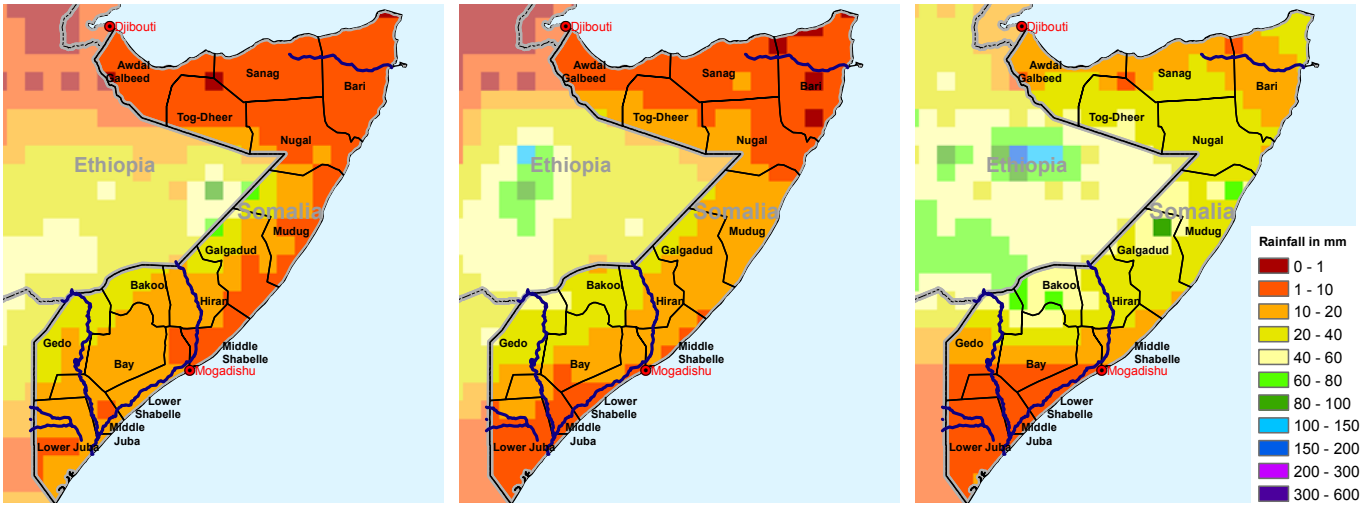

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***Figure 2*. 10-daily rainfall in mm during October 2008. Data derived from ECMWF model.**

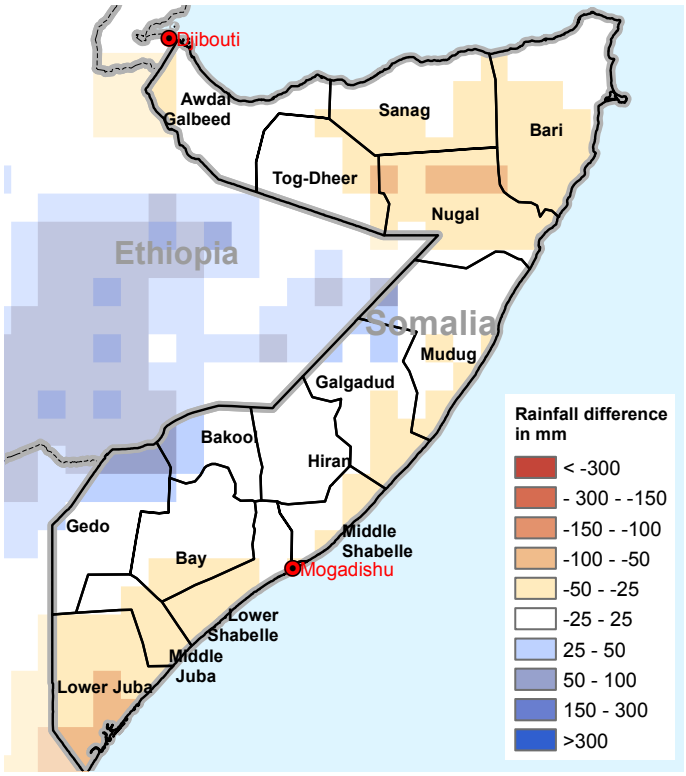

***Figure 3.* Cumulated rainfall difference from long term average (1974 – 2003) in mm for the month of October 2008.**

Remote Sensing Analysis – Agriculture

A normal to slightly early start of the Deyr season is visible for rainfed agriculture in the Bay, Bakool, Middle Shabelle and Gedoregions. In Hiran the onset of the agricultural cycle seems to be stronger than usual. For the Lower Shabelle region, no clear start of the Deyr season is visible yet, while the bad start of the first 2008 rainy season was followed by a very clear off season crop cycle. According to FSAU the late rains have led to significant off season maize planting. These crops should now have been harvested and have performed well according to the vegetation index.

The crop performance in the North West is close to average according to NDVI. Rainfall recorded by 3 stations in the region (Swalim Dek. Rainfall Bulletin, Issue 6) confirm that the Karan rainfall (Aug. – Oct.) was normal. ■

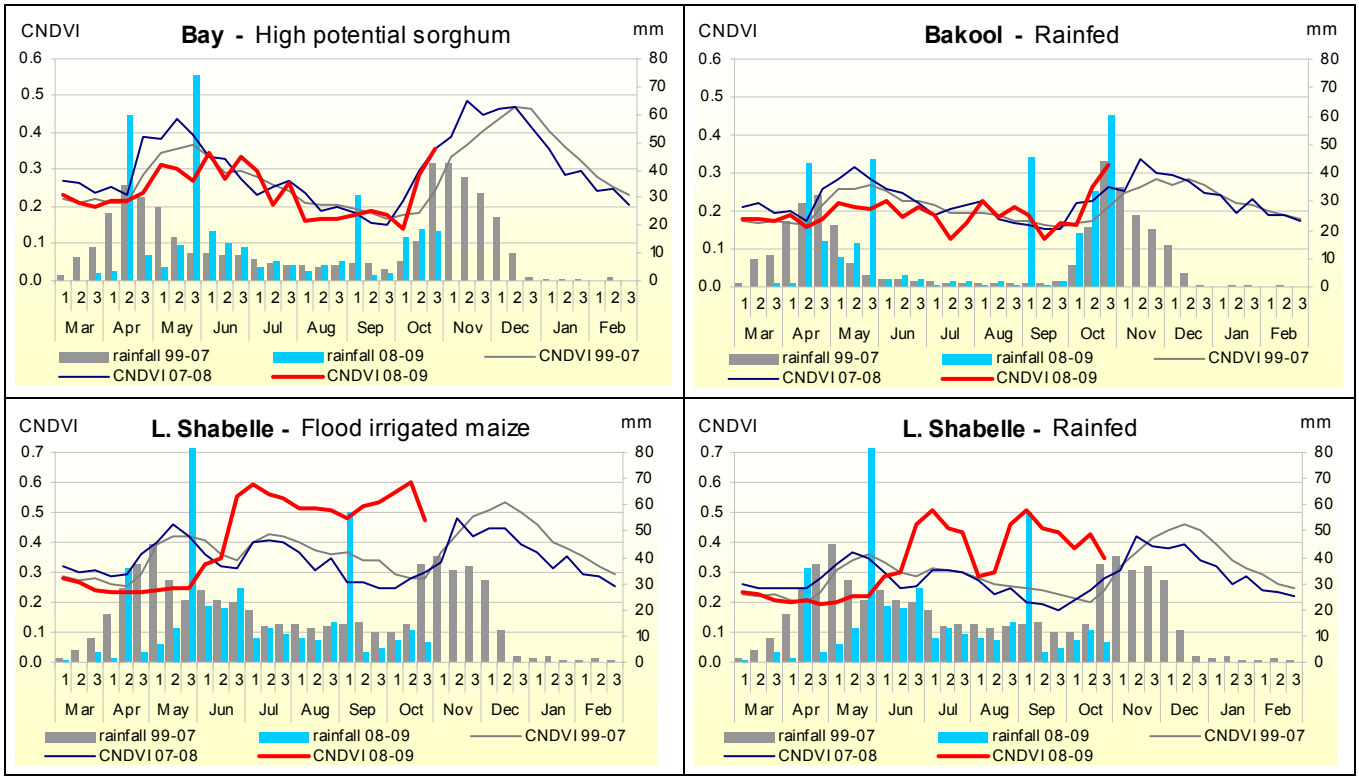

Figure 4. **Time series of crop specific NDVI and rainfall patterns in Somalia. The graphs compare the current season with the historical average and the previous year.**

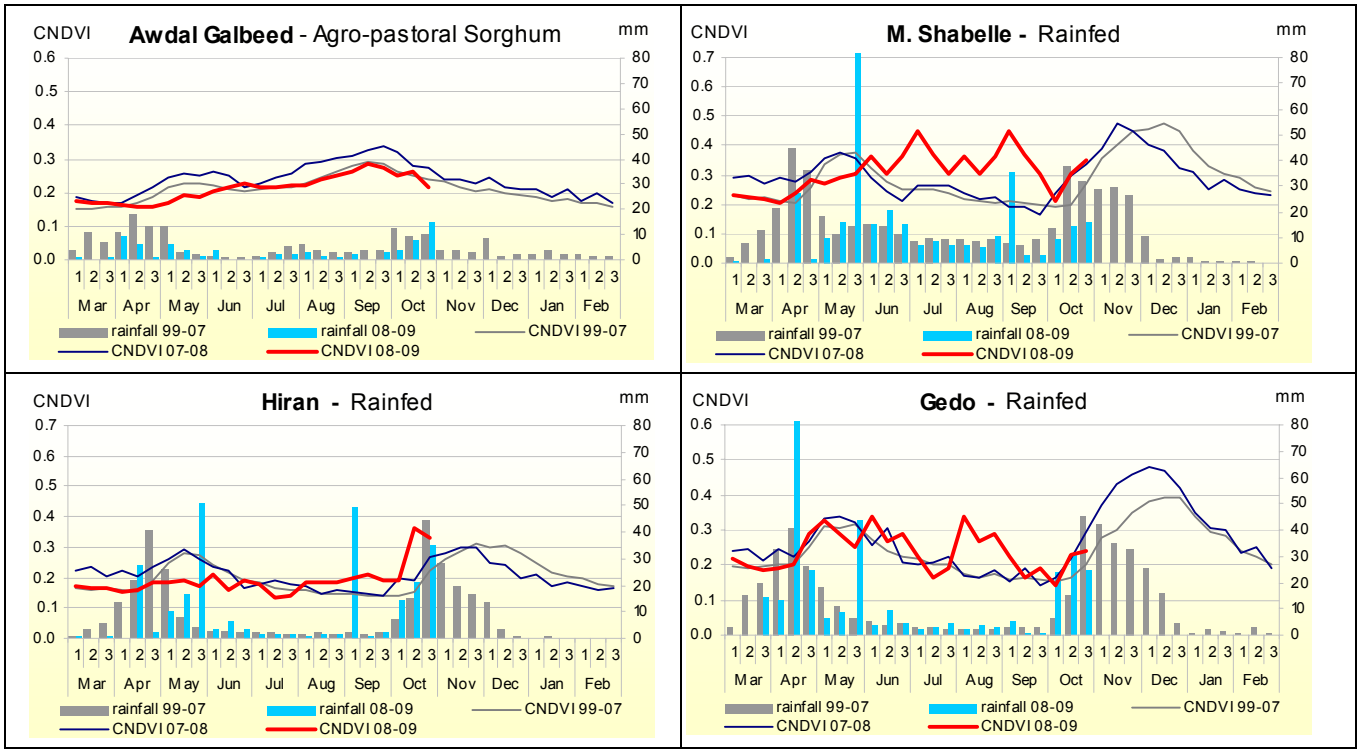

Figure 4 cont. **Time series of crop specific NDVI and rainfall patterns in Somalia. The graphs compare the current season with the historical average and the previous year.**

Remote Sensing Analysis - Pasture

The Southern part of the country looks clearly more humid than usual and even the central regions like Galgaduud, which have been suffering from a long drought, are slowly recovering.

A slightly below normal vegetation activity is visible in parts of Togdheer and Nugal regions. ■

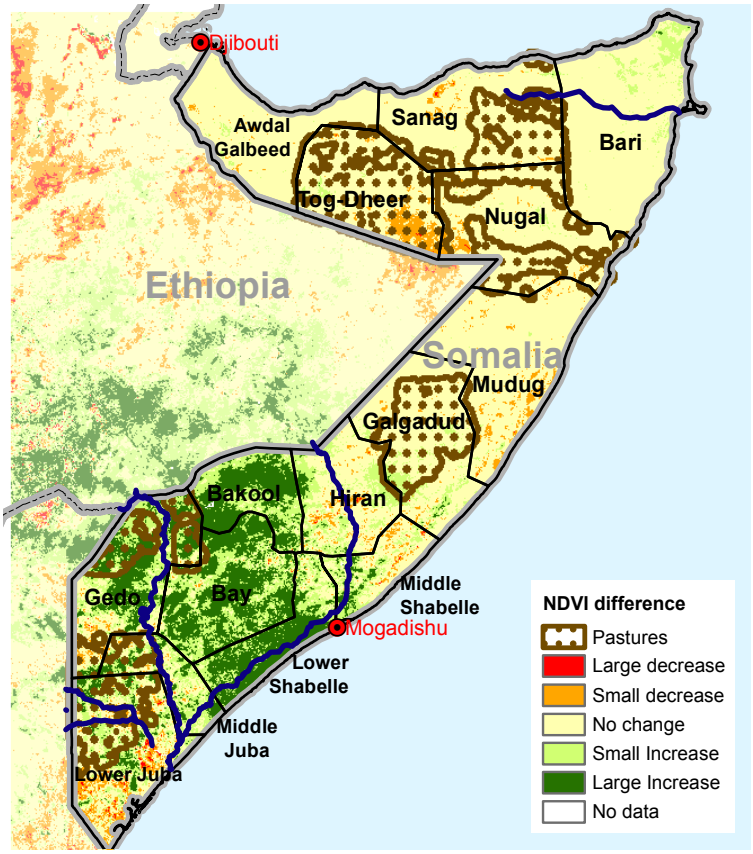

Figure 5. **NDVI Monthly difference with the long term average (1999-2007).**

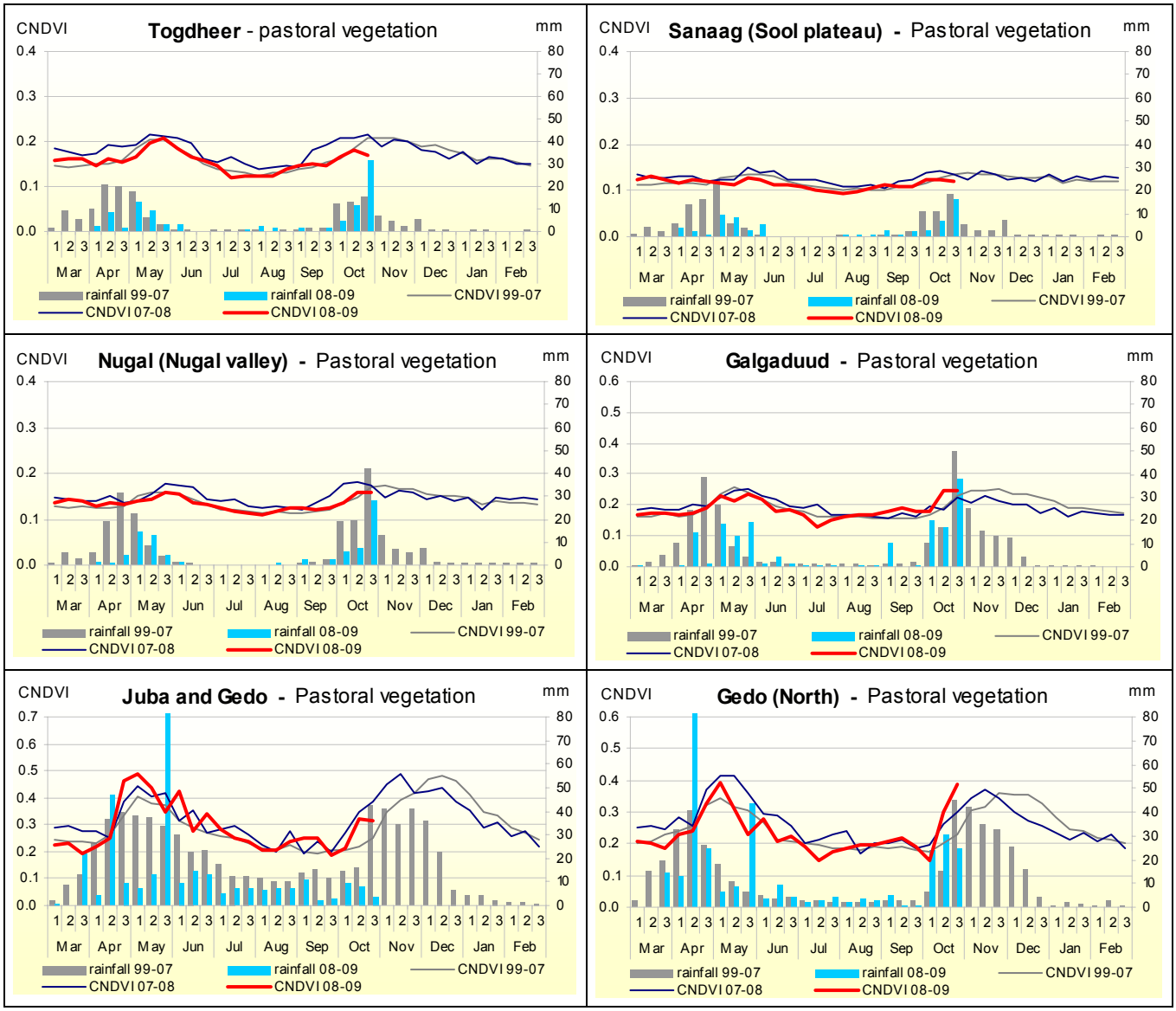

Figure 6. **Time series of crop specific NDVI and rainfall patterns in Somalia. The graphs compare the current season with the historical average and the previous year.**

Upcoming activities and links:

- For a more complete analysis of the food security situation in Somalia please refer to FSAU (Food Security Assessment Unit) http://www.fsausomali.org/
- FOOD SEC has organized the 1st Rainfall workshop (Rainfall estimates for crop monitoring and food security), 22-24 October 2008 in ISPRA (VA) Italy. The presentations can be accessed here: ftp://mars.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Public/Oscar/
- The JRC Sudan bulletin stopped in 2007 to avoid overlapping with the SAMIS Sudan Seasonal Monitor. Technical support is regularly provided by MARS-FOOD to the SAMIS team. Contact address: Mr. Rogerio Bonifacio (SIFSIA FAO Sudan).

Bulletin download:

- All MARS-FOOD bulletins can be downloaded here: ftp://mars.jrc.ec.europa.eu/bulletin

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